

Silicon Times Report

The Original Independent OnLine Magazine"
(Since 1987)

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Feds Probe Win 95 Again!
End Taligent Work!
Survey Sees Multi-PC Homes!

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From the Editor's Desk...

The number of days left before Christmas is closing in fast..

Microsoft is preparing for the glut of user assistance calls to be generated by Santa's delivering all those copies of Windows 95. They're bringing in additional help and keeping the help line open through the Holidays. All the new Software and hardware is selling like there is no tomorrow. This is truly going to be a technology Christmas Sales Season.

Would you believe.. The D.O.J. is starting up AGAIN with their crazy nonsense of hounding Microsoft over Windows 95?? What happened here didn't somebody get the right complimentary copy or are the political contributions not flowing fast enough?? The latest has to do with allegations that the Plus! Package for Windows 95 cripples the Internet software that competes with Windows 95. This is pure HOGWASH!! As a matter of fact, back when we were beta testing Windows 95 . I installed a competitive package and it, incredibly.. Replaced the standard Winsock.dll with its own and effectively crippled Windows 95's Internet dialer!! That software folks, was WinCim 1.4. Now I'm not saying the replacement of the standard Winsock.dll was deliberate but I AM saying that the allegations are somewhat enigmatic and should read that Windows 95 was being victimized by those who felt threatened by MSN. Yes, that's right, the same old bugaboo raising its ugly head again. The existing services being paranoid to the extreme over MSN. This tripe is getting old fast. What the criers don't realize it makes them look extremely immature in the business, incapable of competing, convinced they're outgunned and outclassed and most of all, whipped before the starter's pistol is ever fired!

These outfits have simply got to face the facts that Windows 95 is here to stay for the duration and will evolve into the graceful Swan its intended to be. Can you say Cairo?? There ..I thought you could. The bottom line is really quite clear. the operating system is for the users, clearly a step above anything out there or even contemplated at this time. Win95 has taken the drudgery out of everyday computing and at the same time, put the "fun" back in. Sooner or later the "criers" will wake up and realize that Windows 95 has proven it is helping their business's grow not shrivel. But of course, they'll have to stop with the drivels long enough to see that growth instead of feeling sorry for themselves.

The US Department of Justice. let's see. they're headed up by Janet

Reno. Odd isn't it that the USA is on the verge of a Drug Epidemic with a NEW Glamour DRUG that at this time is ravaging Europe.. What is Janet & Co. doing?? Chasing Microsoft again!!?? Ecstasy is about to hit the USA in a big way and the great guardians of law and order in Washington State and Washington DC are busy tilting at Windmills, killing US Citizens, harassing the parents of a lost child in Coconut Grove.. offering lame excuses to Senate Investigating Committees. When is the utter non-sense going to stop and the real Department of Justice re-appear?? Janet Reno & Co., should be very busy with the implementation of effective drug interdiction programs, rehab programs and most of all, the investigation, arrest and incarceration of the BIG MONEY PEOPLE BEHIND the Drug Smuggling and distribution empires within the continental United States. not harassing US Businesses like Microsoft that more often than not, PAY more in annual taxes than the Department of Justice spends in Drug Enforcement. Not to mention all the taxpayers (US Citizens and voters) that Microsoft both directly and indirectly puts bread on their tables and money into their family's futures.

It's high time the Justice Dep't. began to hear from the US population as a whole both directly and through our elected officials. if each and every person who also is able to see the terrible picture being portrayed above. the DOJ's warped and totally insane sense of priorities.. were to reach out and "touch" their elected representative and perhaps a postcard or two to Janet Reno's office asking HER what is going on with the persecution of MS?? This would serve to let them all know we are sick and tired of watching the constant hounding and badgering of Microsoft. While the country is on its way to hell in handbasket filled with illicit drugs, the DOJ is busy trying to hurt LEGAL Businesses ! Talk about cabinet members that are total embarrassments to the President. Hey Janet!! Smell the coffee yet??

Now back to our regularly scheduled editorial. and magazine.

Of Special Note:

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STReport is now ready to offer much more in the way of serving the Networks, Online Services and Internet's vast, fast growing site list and userbase. We now have our very own WEB/NewsGroup/FTP Site and although its in its early stages of construction, do stop by and have a look see. Since We've received numerous requests to receive STReport from a wide variety of Internet addressees, we were compelled to put together an Internet distribution/mailing list for those who wished to receive STReport on a regular basis, the file is ZIPPED, then UUENCODED. Unfortunately, we've also received a number of opinions that the UUENCODING was a real pain to deal with. So, as of October 01,1995, you'll be able to download STReport directly from our very own SERVER & WEB Site. While there, be sure to join our STR list. In any case, our current Internet mailing list will continue to be used for at least the next eight weeks. Each of our readers will have by then, received their information packet about how they may upgrade their personal STR News Services.

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STReport Headline News

LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Feds Launch Windows 95 Probe

Word on the street is federal investigators are asking whether Microsoft Corp. intentionally set up digital roadblocks in its Windows 95 operating system to disable rival companies' Internet access programs. According to the Wall Street Journal this morning, the Justice Department has issued subpoenas to CompuServe, Netscape Communications Corp., and Netcom On-line Communications Services Inc.

The paper says federal investigators are focusing on whether Windows 95 and its related Internet software improperly disable rival programs that let users access the Internet's World Wide Web. As noted, a number of online companies, including CompuServe and Netscape, complained about the Windows 95 program when it made its debut in August, saying the software and an accompanying product called Plus!, which provides Internet access, essentially wiped out rival access software.

Microsoft executives contend the problem was caused by weakness in the other companies' software, saying it has helped rivals fix any snags affecting their products and that any problems created by its programs were

unintentional. Michael Conte, Microsoft's group manager for personal systems, told the paper his employer would not deliberately make Windows 95 incompatible with rival products because such glitches would detract from the popularity of its product.

Packard Bell Denies Money Woes

Despite worries among investors, computer maker Packard Bell Electronics Inc. is denying speculation it is having financial trouble. On the contrary, "Packard Bell is having a great year," says President/CEO Beny Alagem. As reported earlier, analysts this week attributed a reduced order at chipmaker Cirrus Logic Inc. and some financial juggling at Intel Corp. to difficulties at Packard Bell.

The Wall Street Journal has quoted some observers as saying the company may have built too many PCs that use the 75 MHz version of Intel's Pentium chip while most of the consumer buying has been for PCs with Pentium chips that run at speeds of 100 MHz and 133 MHz.

However, reporting from the firm's Sacramento, California, offices, the Associated Press quotes Alagem as saying the company's inventory is balanced, adding, "We have no excess of Pentium 75s. The opposite is true. We are seeing high demand for that configuration as well as for Pentium 100s and 133s. In fact, after the Thanksgiving weekend, several retail chains called to reorder Pentium 75s for Christmas."

AP notes Alagem's statement did not directly address its relationship with Intel. As noted, Intel's most recent quarterly financial filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission reported it was owed \$476 million by one of its five largest customers and had converted some of the debt into a loan. Intel didn't identify the company, but a number of industry analysts said they believed it to be Packard Bell.

Packard Bell is privately held and so isn't required to disclose financial data the way publicly owned companies are, but Alagem said his firm had record sales in October and that its 1995 revenues will be about \$4.6 billion, 45 percent higher than last year. He added, "We see no slowdown for the fourth quarter."

IBM, Apple, HP End Taligent Work

Taligent Inc. -- a software joint venture by IBM, Apple Computer Inc. and Hewlett-Packard Co. -- is being dissolved. More than half the staff is being laid off and Taligent's technology is being moved to IBM. That is the word in The Wall Street Journal this morning, where reporter Bart Ziegler writes of a new arrangement that has Apple and HP continuing to have rights to use Taligent's technology, called CommonPoint, but placing its control with IBM.

"The venture will be renamed the Taligent Object Technology Center," adds Ziegler, "and will continue to operate from its base in Cupertino, California." Quoting industry executives close to the decision, Ziegler says the move is designed "to cut costs at the venture, which devised new software technology but failed to gain much acceptance for it in the industry."

The ending of Taligent comes just two weeks after IBM and Apple ended another joint software venture, Kaleida Labs Inc. Both Kaleida and Taligent arose from the surprise 1991 IBM-Apple alliance which was intended to challenge Intel Corp. and Microsoft Corp. as industry standard-bearers. Says the Journal, "Taligent, like Kaleida, fell victim to conflicting agendas and differing product timetables among the parent companies, according to former employees. While it created interesting technology, only IBM has firmly committed to using it in its products."

Originally Taligent was to create a new PC operating system based on "object" technology (software written in small reusable chunks so that new programs can be created more easily), but, says Ziegler, "faced with the onslaught of Microsoft Corp.'s Windows, it scaled back its plan and became a maker of software 'tools' that are used to create programs."

CompuServe Seeks FEC Clarification

CompuServe Inc. says it will ask the Federal Election Commission (FEC) for an advisory opinion on its previously announced plan to offer free access to the Internet, the World Wide Web and the CompuServe Information Service to all federal and state political candidates through CompuServe's Election Connection '96 online area.

CompuServe wants to know if it is simply furthering the process of public discourse by opening cyberspace to all candidates, or whether the free access represents an in-kind corporate contribution to candidates. "This is an area where we expect the law is already sufficiently flexible to accommodate the reality of cyberspace as an important and fast-growing medium for political debate," notes a statement from

CompuServe President and CEO Bob Massey. "A recent survey done for our product development group shows that as much as 27 percent of the U.S. population has access to online services. That represents the potential involvement of millions and millions of voters. "Because our offer includes access to CompuServe's Home Page Wizard (CompuServe's software tool for building home pages) we are opening up two-way communication between the candidates and anyone who has access to cyberspace," continues Massey. "This seems to us to be a prime example of democracy in action. By opening up access to all the candidates and their views, we help voters become better informed in the months leading up to the election."

CompuServe says it decided to request the ruling after conflicting news stories appeared questioning the offer to federal candidates. State candidates will not be affected by the ruling.

While it isn't illegal for CompuServe to offer candidates online access, the company is asking for the ruling to assure federal candidates that it is legal for them to accept the service. And with the 1996 elections rapidly approaching, the company is asking that a ruling be made as soon as possible.

Multimedia Firms Set Merger

Two pioneering multimedia CD-ROM publishers have signed a letter of intent to merge in a transaction estimated at \$39.05 million. The deal between Graphix Zone Inc. and StarPress Inc. is subject to various conditions, including regulatory approvals and the approval of the shareholders of each company. A definitive merger agreement is expected by Dec. 31 and the merger set to close in March.

Holders of StarPress common stock will receive approximately .15 shares of Graphix Zone common stock for each share of StarPress stock. Approximately 4.4 million shares of Graphix Zone common stock will be exchanged for StarPress stock, valuing the transaction at approximately \$39.05 million, based on Graphix Zone's closing stock price of \$8.875 on Dec. 1. Upon consummation of the merger, current StarPress shareholders will own approximately 54 percent of the combined company. Graphix Zone is a producer of interactive music and entertainment CD-ROMs. StarPress is a publisher and developer of reference and entertainment software products.

Apple's 'Pippin' Comes Next Year

Pippin -- Apple Computer Inc.'s new multimedia device, a hybrid between a television-based computer game player and a stripped-down but speedy computer -- is expected to be introduced next year, first in Japan and later in the United States. So said Apple CEO Michael Spindler during presentation at the annual Personal Computer Outlook conference in Burlingame, California, where the device was demonstrated yesterday. The Reuter News Service notes Apple has licensed its Pippin technology to Japanese game maker Bandai Co. Ltd., which will market the system in Japan under its logo. Apple officials in Japan recently discussed Pippin plans.

Spindler did not discuss pricing, but Stephen Franzese, director of business development for Apple's entertainment and new media division, told the wire service Pippin is expected to sell for about \$500. Franzese added three U.S. licensees have lined up -- he declined to identify the licensees,

saying it is up to the partners themselves to make any announcements -- and that Pippin should be on store shelves in the United States in autumn 1996. Spindler told those at the conference that licensees will initially sell Pippin under their own logos in the U.S., but that eventually Apple may sell them under its own label.

SoftKey Buys Compton's, Learning

For \$106.5 million in stock, software distributor SoftKey International Inc. has agreed to buy Tribune Co.'s Compton's NewMedia Inc. and Compton's Learning Co. Under the deal, SoftKey also will assume \$17 million in debt. In exchange, says United Press International in a report from SoftKey's Cambridge, Massachusetts, headquarters, Tribune has agreed to make a conditional \$150 million investment in SoftKey, a move UPI says "reflects the rising stakes in the booming personal computer industry."

Compton's, based in Carlsbad, California, is best known for its Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia and other educational multimedia titles on CD-ROMs. UPI says the Chicago-based Tribune's investment will consist of bonds convertible to SoftKey stock, "but that deal will occur only if SoftKey is able to complete its \$570 million bid to buy educational software publisher Learning Co."

Note, though, that Learning Co. is spurning the offer in favor of a \$470 million buyout by Broderbund Software Inc. "Following the announcement of the deal with Tribune," says UPI, "SoftKey said it was considering revising its offer for Learning Co. but it gave no further details." The wire service notes that if SoftKey can win the battle for Learning Co., Tribune will wind up owning 8 percent of SoftKey. The firm also has agreed to buy Minnesota Educational Computing Corp.

Sun, Netscape Unveil JavaScript

JavaScript, a new programming language for customizing software applications on computer networks and the Internet, was unveiled today by Netscape Communications Corp. and Sun Microsystems Inc. The language is to be distributed free on the Internet, a move the Reuter News Service says could enable Netscape and Sun "to set the next generation of software standards for the Internet, where rival Microsoft Corp. is also investing heavily."

The wire notes in a report from Mountain View, Calif., that Microsoft this week is expected to outline its plans for future Internet products. However, Netscape and Sun say 28 companies have agreed to adopt JavaScript as a standard and provide it in their products.

Marc Andreessen, vice president of technology at Netscape, told the wire service, "This broad industry support for JavaScript will fuel rapid development of an entire new class of live online applications." Analyst Laura Conigliario of Prudential Securities said the support of JavaScript "is definitely an effort to take a position counter to Microsoft," adding, "From an offensive point of view, many companies are finding their strategies and business models cut off by what Microsoft has done or is likely to do."

Shareware Group Opens Net Sites

The Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP), the international trade organization representing "try-it-before-you-buy-it" software developers, has established two new Internet sites. The ASP has created a home page on the World Wide Web (<http://www.asp-shareware.org>) that offers shareware industry news, new shareware programs produced by ASP members and links to Web pages operated by ASP members, among other resources.

Additionally, the organization has opened an FTP site (<ftp.asp-shareware.org>) that contains copies of shareware files included on the CD-ROM published monthly by the ASP. "We're extremely excited that our two Internet sites are up and running," says Richard Harper, the ASP's president. On CompuServe, the organization runs the ASP/Shareware Forum (GO ASPFORUM) and the ASP CD-ROM Forum (GO ASPCD).

Program Checks CD-ROM Compatibility

TouchStone Software Corp. has joined forces with Blockbuster Video to

publish a program that lists all CD-ROMs available at Blockbuster outlets and automatically indicates which titles are compatible with a shopper's own PC. The software, Blockbuster PC MatchMaker, is designed to take the hassle out of renting or buying CD-ROMs by minimizing the likelihood that customers will bring home titles that won't run on their PCs. The program is a customized version of TouchStone's WINCheckIt utility.

"Our aim is to make buying or renting software simple and easy for our customers," says Mike Clarke, Blockbuster's vice president of purchasing. We're excited about PC MatchMaker's debut because it will simplify our customers' CD-ROM buying decisions for the holidays.

Blockbuster PC MatchMaker, which is supplied on a 3.5-inch floppy disk, inventories and analyzes its host PC's configuration. The program then compares the PC's capability to the Blockbuster inventory of CD-ROM titles. Once a title is selected, a content description of the CD-ROM appears on the PC's screen along with a status box indicating whether or not the software will run on the system. If the title and the PC are incompatible, Blockbuster PC MatchMaker explains what steps can be taken to effectively use the software.

The rollout of Blockbuster PC MatchMaker is scheduled for Dec. 4. The software's shelf price will be \$9.99, but will be available at no charge to customers renting or purchasing a CD-ROM title at Blockbuster. As the Blockbuster Video CD-ROM inventory changes every two months, a software upgrade will become available.

CompuServe Names WOW! Editor

CompuServe Inc. has announced the appointment of Howard Blumenthal as editor-in-chief of Project WOW!, the company's major new online venture. Blumenthal will lead the editorial direction and content development of CompuServe's consumer-targeted online service. Project WOW! will be unveiled next spring. CompuServe notes that under Blumenthal's direction, the service will deliver multimedia programming designed and packaged for all members of the family.

"Howard's appointment marks an important milestone in the development of Project WOW!" says Scott Kauffman, vice president of CompuServe's consumer markets business. "Howard has been involved in developing award-winning family-oriented content for more than 20 years. His addition underscores our aggressive focus in developing the first service designed to meet the needs of the next generation of online consumers."

Blumenthal was the creator and senior producer of the Peabody and Emmy award-winning PBS television series Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego? In addition, he was one of the creators and production consultant of MTV's Remote Control series. As senior vice president of Kidsoft, Inc., he was responsible for all aspects of production for the company's quarterly CD-ROM magazine and oversaw the development of the company's online presence. He has also been involved in new media projects on behalf of TCI, Hearst New Media and Technology, Warner Communications, HarperCollins, Mindscape, Parker Brothers, RCA, Minolta, EMI, Atari, Gruppo Fininveste, WGBH and the Cartoon Network.

Blumenthal has authored 11 books about new media. His journalistic achievements include a nationally syndicated consumer electronics and personal computer column called High Tech Home that has appeared regularly in the Chicago Sun-Times, St. Louis Post Dispatch and The Cleveland Plain Dealer. He has contributed to many publications, including TV Guide, Family Circle, Games Magazine, Video Review, American Film and various Scholastic magazines.

Wired Threats Shut Down Web Site

The Hollywood Network, an entertainment industry-oriented site on the Internet's World Wide Web, has been shut down by the operators after actress-director Jodie Foster attracted some death threat messages on its chat room. The Daily Variety newspaper reports this was not the first time some threatening comments were made on the site, "but," adds United Press

International, "the serious nature of the comments prompted the site's operators to make a report to the FBI." Said the wire service, "Authorities believe Foster, who won Oscars for her roles in 'The Accused' and 'The Silence of the Lambs,' never was in real danger." Her attorney, Matthew Saver, shrugged off the incident, telling Variety, "I think what we've got is a bunch of 12-year-olds with a modem."

Apple, Graham to Host Net Party

Teaming with rock promoter Bill Graham Presents, Apple Computer will host a San Francisco New Year's Eve party that will be broadcast worldwide over the Internet's World Wide Web. The firms said yesterday that while as many as 15,000 people are expected to pay \$72.50 to attend the event in person, another 30 million people worldwide probably will access the concert free through an Apple Computer Web site.

United Press International quotes Apple Vice President Satjiv Chahil as saying the Net concert will include a wide range of offerings. Digital cameras would be passed out and record the event, and video, sound and images would frequently be transmitted to computers via "webcasting."

He said only users with a 64-bit operating system will be able to pick up the real-time video, but others will have easy access to digital still pictures and real-time sound, adding, "We hope to get across some of the exhilarating feeling of a live event. The Web is about all of us coming together to create a new society."

Says UPI, "In addition to jazz, comedy and live music from such groups as Carlos Santana and the Gin Blossoms, party-goers will be able to participate in a technology and media fair with Internet access, chat lines and QuickTime cameras." And John Marks of the San Francisco Visitors and Convention Bureau said other websites that can be accessed from the concert will include a virtual-reality tour through the city. Says Marks, "There are few cities that could pull (the Internet event) off, but San Francisco has the reputation and icons to pull it off and draw people in."

Magazine Warns of Sexist Software

PC World magazine is warning parents to beware of "sexist" software. In its December issue, the publication says some "edutainment" software may be promoting gender stereotypes. In most children's computer programs, the male characters embark on exciting adventures while the females watch, wait, and support them, according to the article. Experts insist that the gender stereotypes may have far-reaching effects as children identify with the characters.

Only 28 of 344 edutainment titles reviewed by a prominent children's software newsletter featured an active female lead, notes the article. And while animal characters may be portrayed as gender-neutral, they are many times obviously male. Software companies claim they are simply following the tradition of children's books and toys through the licensing of existing characters.

"Parents must be aware of the subtle and not-so-subtle stereotypes in the computer games their children play," says Roberta Furger, PC World's consumer editor. "Children may identify with characters, fulfilling stereotypical expectations that boys be aggressive and girls passive and pretty. Fortunately, many manufacturers are breaking through the stereotypes by developing strong female characters, including Carmen Sandiego and Millie the Cow, says the article. In notes that the strong and smart

Carmen attracts boys as well as girls; Millie helps do away with the idea that "girls don't do math." To combat sexist software, PC World suggests that parents screen their children's programs for products that are less violent, more open-ended and offer many paths toward a final goal. If the child is exposed to sexism in software, parents should discuss the roles and make sure the child understands that the stereotypes are wrong.

Cyberporn Bill Compromise Seen

Capitol Hill watchers expect Republican leaders of a House effort to

overhaul telecommunications laws to support a budding compromise that would make it a federal crime to transmit by computer pornography judged to be harmful to children. The Associated Press quotes Rep. Michael Oxley of Ohio, a senior Republican on the House Commerce subcommittee on telecommunications and finance, as saying the proposal should help assure passage of the telecommunications bill before year's end. And Rep. Jack Fields, R-Texas, the subcommittee's chairman, also reportedly supports the proposal.

However, notes AP, "there was no immediate indication from Senate and House advocates of much tougher prohibitions on computer pornography whether the proposal by freshman Republican Rep. Rick White is sufficient for them." AP says White, whose Washington state district includes the headquarters of software giant Microsoft Corp., drafted the proposed compromise language in response to demands by the Senate and conservative Christian groups for strict criminal sanctions against so-called cyberporn.

As reported, the Senate's telecommunications bill, approved earlier this year, includes provisions to impose prison sentences and fines of up to \$100,000 on people who make indecent material available to children. The measure is opposed vigorously by civil liberties groups and online computer service providers and was not included in the House bill.

AP says White's proposal softens the Senate bill's prohibitions by limiting the ban to only material judged harmful to children, graphic or explicit sexual matter without redeeming value. "It also offers a defense to online services if they make a good-faith effort to keep pornography out of the reach of children," the wire service says.

Survey Sees Multi-PC Homes

A new survey says that for PC makers to achieve sales growth they increasingly must rely on consumers who are buying a second or third machine. The research by Link Resources Inc. of New York also found PC sales growth is moving faster in Europe and the Pacific Rim than in the United States. According to the Associated Press, Link's survey suggests the U.S. market is almost saturated, "partly because America adopted computers for home use much sooner than other countries," the wire service says. "It also indicates more people update their machines every few years."

The research also finds:

- '• There is more than one computer in 30 percent of PC-owning households in the United States.
- '• About 35 to 40 percent of all U.S. households are expected to have a PC by the end of this year, with around 11 percent owning at least two.
- '• Worldwide PC sales to consumers this year should reach 21.2 million units, including 9.45 million in the United States, up from 16.3 million, 7.5 million in the United States, last year.
- '• In 1996, 26.8 million PCs are forecast in sales to consumers, with 11.1 million in the United States.
- '• Consumers account for about 45 percent of all PC sales, followed by businesses, government and educational institutions.

Link analyst Andy Bose, who led the research, told the wire service, "PC manufacturers are going to have to depend on current PC households for much of future growth. When you get to 55 to 60 percent penetration range, it's going to be difficult to get any new first-time buyers." AP says the survey found similar behavior in 12 other countries, particularly Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong, where PC sales also are in nearly one-third of all households. In Europe, PCs are now in about one-fourth of all households.

Corel December News!

Greetings from Corel and best wishes for the holiday season. We've just completed our fiscal fourth quarter and I'm pleased to report that our company is riding a wave of new product momentum. Since September, we have shipped German, French, Spanish, and Swedish versions of CorelDRAW 6. In November we launched CorelVIDEO and shipped new products like CorelXARA and Corel PrintHouse. We shipped a Windows 95 version of CorelFLOW and Photo-Paint 6. New CD Home titles including Interactive Alphabet, The Complete Herman Collection, Internet Mania and World's Greatest Classic Books are now available in general distribution.

December is destined to be another very busy month! We have scheduled the release and shipment of Italian, Brazilian Portuguese and Dutch language versions of CorelDRAW 6. We are shipping separate Windows 95 and Macintosh versions of CD Creator 2, an updated version of CorelSCSI and new CD Home titles including Yellow Hippo, Hollywood Pinups and our first title in the Medical Series on Epilepsy.

Internet Mania, a valuable collection of utilities for anyone who has Internet access, is the first productivity title in the Corel CD HOME series. Internet Mania carries a suggested list price of \$24.95 US. It includes:

1/ Web Page Update Notifier

The Web Page Update Notifier checks for updates to Web pages. It accomplishes this task by going to those pages every day when you log on (or at scheduled times), and compares the content with the previous version. If the page has changed, the user is notified.

2/ Lycos(Web Search

The Lycos Catalogue of the Internet contains the largest catalogue of World Wide Web pages and over 400,000 of these are included in Internet Mania. Searching is integrated with Windows(95 Explorer and is accessible from the Start menu.

3/ Web Catalog

The Web catalog is another front end for the Lycos database whose interface is organized by pre-defined categories. It includes a hierarchy of topics, each is similar to the format in the Yellow Pages.

4/ NewsScan

NewsScan acts as a filter to search through news groups of interest. NewsScan regularly searches through the news groups that you define and builds a list of messages that satisfy your criteria.

5/ Corel FTP

Corel FTP is a program that fits right into Windows 95, has the ability to work like a traditional graphical FTP client and provides non-frustrating access to busy FTP sites.

6/ Personal Web Server

The Web Server provides a simple way for users to put information on the Web. Anybody with a Web Browser and the name of a user's machine can read these files. The server tracks the number of times files are downloaded and the user can stop sharing the document at any time.

7/ Home Page Author

The Home Page Author is an easy, step-by-step way to create World Wide Web pages. Knowledge of HTML and how the Web works is not needed to create

professional looking pages.

8/ QuoteScan-A Personal Stock Ticker

QuoteScan allows user to track the prices of 5 company stocks. Information displayed includes price, units that have changed hands and price change on the day. Data is updated every 5, 10, 30 or 60 minutes, or daily, with delayed data of 20 minutes.

Corel has developed a CMX Plug-in Viewer for Netscape's web browser Navigator 2.0 that lets users view vector file formats on the World Wide Web. The plug-in viewer makes it possible for Internet users to view Corel CMX files (vector format) online as opposed to the traditional GIF or JPEG files (raster format) that are currently associated with Internet use. It is a self-extracting .exe file that is available now for downloading from Corel's Home Page at <http://www.corel.com/corelcmx/>. Corel will also make the viewer available free of charge to any third-party Internet site that makes it available for general use.

The CMX Plug-in Viewer delivers the benefits of vector file formats to Internet users who have previously only been able to use raster file formats. The advantages include the following:

- '• Reusable: Vector images are reusable and scaleable to any size. Resizing images in vector formats does not result in the jaggies created by resizing pixel-based raster images.
- '• Rich Presentation: Vector-based images consist of objects with defined properties while raster-based images rely on pixels for their structure. Vector formats allow for a richer and fuller representation of the object.
- '• Transparency: The background for vector graphics is automatically transparent. There is no need to rely on masking tools to remove unwanted backgrounds.
- '• Worldwide Usage: Vector formats such as CMX or CDR are used extensively worldwide. Corel's user base alone is estimated at 3 million people.
- '• Economical format: Depending on the type of graphic, (logos, maps etc) vector file formats such as CMX or CDR can take significantly less bandwidth than raster formats such as GIF.

Corel plans to continue development of the CMX Viewer Plug-in over the next several months. Further enhancements will continue to highlight the capabilities of vector graphics for the Net.

The Corel Professional Photo Series consists of 490 individual titles, 13 Volume Sets and 2 Stock Photo Libraries. In the month of December we are adding these new photo CD-ROMs: Ireland II, International Cuisine, Sand & Pebble Textures, Zion National Park, Prince Edward Island, Botanical Prints, Sierra Nevada Mountains, Bark Textures, Colors & Textures, Patterns In Stone, Textile Designs, Steam Trains II, Great Works of Art: The Orient, Great Works of Art: Studies Of the Masters, Great Works of Art: Landscapes, Great Works of Art: Art of Antiquity, Jewelry, EMS Rescue, People at Work, War, Great Works of Art: Groups & Figures, England, Alien Landscapes, Recreational Activities, Transportation, Seasons, Fabulous Flowers, Men of the World, Flower Beds, Hanover, Germany, Museums of Ottawa-Hull, Special Effects.

More than 3,500 works of fiction, short stories, plays, poetry, historical, political, religious and scientific documents are now available on CD-ROM with the release of The World's Greatest Classic Books. This reference CD-ROM is Corel Corporation's newest addition to its CD HOME line. It carries a suggested list price of \$24.95 US and features the works of over 200

renowned authors.

All text is complete and unabridged and each literary work can be read on-screen or printed for reading away from the computer. An adjustable automatic scroll mechanism is available for on-screen viewing and The American Heritage dictionary is linked to the text for quick definitions of problem words. The title includes 200 biographies, over fifteen minutes of full motion video from classics like Treasure Island and Pygmalion and more than 300 illustrations. It also includes a number of useful tools that will make research work quicker and easier.

The minimum system requirements include Windows 3.1, a 486 33, 4 MB of RAM, a double-speed CD-ROM drive and a mouse.

Corel is shipping Corel ArtShow 6, the color coffee-table book with companion CD-ROM. ArtShow 6 displays over 3,000 full color images selected from over 7,800 entries submitted to the Corel \$2,000,000 World Design Contest. The designs in the anthology represent the work of artists in more than 60 countries.

The Corel ArtShow 6 coffee-table book and companion CD-ROM carries a suggested list price of \$49.95 US and runs on Windows 3.1, Windows 95 and Macintosh platforms. The companion CD-ROM is also available in jewelcase format at a price of \$24.95 US.

Corel's 7th Annual \$3,000,000 World Design Contest runs from September 1995 through July of 1996. This year, eight monthly winners will be chosen in the categories of People, Plants and Animals, Landscapes and Landmarks, Technical Drawings and Graphs, Corporate Identification, Page Layout, Abstracts, Specialty and Goodwill Poster. These winners compete for Best of Show and individual Grand Prize honors during the 'Academy Awards of Graphics' Gala scheduled for October, 1996.

Corel is participating in several trade events including the Winter Consumer Electronics Show. Come see the latest CD Home products at Corel's booth in the Sands Convention Center, January 5-7 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

CorelDRAW 6 for Windows 95 swept the product awards presented in November at Fall Comdex by winning the " MVP Award" from PC/Computing in the category of business graphics, an "Editor's Pick" award from Home Office Computing in the Illustration category and a "Best Buy" award from Computer Shopper magazine.

We are pleased to announce that both Ventura 6 for Windows '95 and Windows NT and CorelCAD have entered the beta test phase of our development process. Both products are scheduled for release in the spring of 1996.

CorelVIDEO is going into production! Imagine full-motion picture quality video in a local campus environment and connected to wide area networks at home or satellite offices via the H.320 protocol.

CorelVIDEO has traditional telephone features but also goes beyond conventional features with new and innovative features that only video can provide. The per seat cost of CorelVIDEO is \$499 US excluding the Corel camera. CorelCAM with a suggested list price of \$499 is a fully featured camera with dual lenses, tilt and swivel lens head, video and audio mute, and ergonomically designed for optimal eye contact.

CorelVIDEO is currently in field trials at two separate sites. It will be installed across all divisions at Corel by the end of 1995. This means 600

employees will use this product on a day to day basis.

Since this is my last newsletter this year, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to you, our business partner for the support and service you have provided to our company during 1995. We are excited about the future and the new technological directions our company is taking. We hope you will continue to be an integral part of our 1996 plans.

This newsletter is available electronically via the Internet. If you would like to subscribe and receive your copy automatically, please contact the CorelNET home page at <http://www.corelnet.com> and subscribe by sending an email to cnd-sub@discuss.corelnet.com.

Best regards for the new year,

Arlen Bartsch
Director, Sales & Marketing

Thumbs Plus 3 STR Focus

ThumbsPlus 3.0-S Beta Release 2 Notes

Available NOW... where ever quality Graphics Utilities are found.

Installation ThumbsPlus 3.0-S Beta release 2:

Editor Note.

FYI, this program, among many other powerful features, produces the sharpest, best looking Thumbnails of your Graphics Libraries.. BAR None! Try this program.. you'll never look back. This is GOOD STUFF!!

All necessary files for Windows 95 and Windows NT (3.5.1 or later) are provided as a single ZIP file (TP30SB2.ZIP). There is another zip for installing Win32s 1.3 if you need this to run on Windows 3.1/3.11.

- `• Create a new directory (DO NOT install on top of version 2!).
- `• CD to the new directory.
- `• PKUNZIP TP30SB2.ZIP
- `• Create a program manager icon (NT/3.1) or shortcut (95) for THUMBS.EXE.
- `• If you're running Windows 3.1, be sure you have the latest Win32s release (1.3) before running ThumbsPlus. It will not run properly with earlier releases.
- `• If there is an older version of the 32-bit PhotoCD library (PCDLIB32.DLL) on your system, you may have to rename it or replace it with the version supplied with ThumbsPlus.

Notes on testing the beta shareware release:

- `• This is a pre-release (beta) version of ThumbsPlus. There ARE problems in it! Do not expect it to be a fully-functional, complete product.

- ˆ • This is a pre-release of the SHAREWARE version. As it is being made generally available, we cannot provide registrations to everyone who tests! Also, we will provide the beta of the registered version only to registered users. If you wish to test the registered version, you must be a registered user.
- ˆ • There is no conversion provided for the old-style ThumbsPlus database format (.TUD). There is too much additional data stored in the new database which was not collected for the old format. You must re-scan any files or directories.
- ˆ • Do not install this beta into the same directory as ThumbsPlus version 2. You need to continue using version 2 for production work; only use this beta for testing.
- ˆ • There will be additional toolbar buttons (and maybe icons) available in the final release. If you design any you would like to share with us, please feel free to send them. They may be true-color or 256-color bitmaps. Please do not send JPEG files - the loss (error) makes them inappropriate for the toolbar.
- ˆ • If at all possible, please use the Beta Accuracy Report Form (BARF) at <http://www.cerious.com> to send beta reports and suggestions. These are received via e-mail and can be imported directly into our problem database. Reports sent by regular email, fax, voice, etc. must be manually typed in. If you simply have a question about the beta, please send e-mail to 'pcrews@cerious.com'.

There is also a downloadable BARF form, which you can fill in offline and e-mail (<ftp://ftp.cerious.com/barftemp.txt>).

Problems known or reported by 11/27 but not yet corrected:

- ˆ • The quick-dithering used for displaying 24-bit images on 8-bit (256-color) displays is not working properly in Windows 95. It does work on NT, and we're investigating what the difference is.
- ˆ • Toolbar buttons are always shown as light gray (rather than the current background color) on Win32s and Windows 95. This will be corrected (at least for 95).
- ˆ • Some PNG formats are not yet working properly. (Verified)
- ˆ • Directories do not always have the proper folder colors. (Verified)
- ˆ • File->Register is not functional. (Verified)
- ˆ • Changing the size of the thumbnail using Options->Preferences->(File List) does not work. You CAN, however, change the size of the stored thumbnails by creating a new database (File->New Database). (Verified)
- ˆ • Picture->Annotate does not work; however, you can modify the annotation in the database using Picture->Properties->(Database). (Verified)
- ˆ • The Browse dialog box (for finding a directory to move to, copy to, etc.) sometimes or always (?) causes a GPF on Windows 95. (Not yet reproduced)

- ˆ• When moving a file to a floppy, the program deletes the source file even if the operation fails. (Not yet reproduced)
- ˆ• Some files on network drives will not be loaded, though the same file on a local drive is loaded properly (Not yet reproduced)
- ˆ• Minimizing crashes system; background mode crashes system (on Win32s) (Not yet reproduced).
- ˆ• In the "Save As" dialog box, selecting a file type from the file type drop-down does not update the file name. (Verified)
- ˆ• The HELP files are not yet provided because they are not finished.

Some of the problems fixed since Beta 1:

- ˆ• The appearance of many confirmation and input dialog boxes was updated to be consistent with the other dialog boxes.
- ˆ• Tree->Indicate Expandable Dirs. now works properly.
- ˆ• The taskbar entry for the initial (splash) screen now has "ThumbsPlus" rather than being blank.
- ˆ• Saving pictures was not creating thumbnails for the new file, and sometimes caused a GP fault.
- ˆ• Removing thumbnail tree (Thumbnail->Remove Tree), removing orphans (Thumbnail->Remove Orphans) and automatic orphan removal (from Options->Preferences->(General) now work properly.
- ˆ• Many accelerator keystrokes were added or corrected.
- ˆ• Many menu help items (in the status bar) were added or fixed.
- ˆ• Contact sheets now put the images on the sheet (I broke it when getting the catalog print working on the day before I posted beta 1!)
- ˆ• Disk volume discrimination is better (it no longer confuses drives as far as I can tell.)
- ˆ• The directory list is updated when you create or remove directories.
- ˆ• File->Delete Directory works properly.
- ˆ• You can now set the database attributes on Windows 95 (from File->New Database), such as thumbnail size and color depth.
- ˆ• Spurious "Database error: Unable to retrieve volume information for drive X:\\" were fixed.
- ˆ• View windows and slide show would retreat behind the main window when the toolbar was used. This was fixed.
- ˆ• Several memory leaks were eliminated, and memory handling was made more efficient.
- ˆ• Several resource leaks were eliminated. These were generally benign on Windows 95 or Windows NT, but would cause Windows 3.1/3.11 to lock up or crash.

Note:

Many other problems have been identified and fixed. If a problem you reported is not listed above, I may have categorized it with one of the ones listed, or it could be related to one. Please try the function again on beta 2 and report again if it is not corrected.

MANY, MANY THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

EDUPAGE STR Focus Keeping the users informed

TOP STORIES

Compromise On Cyberporn Legislation
Internet Demand Exceeds Supply At Many Schools
Taligent Goes The Way Of Kaleida
Web May Alleviate High-Tech Obsolescence
Sun Plans Java-Like Microkernel
EIA Endorses Smart-Radio
Kids On The Web
High-Tech Labor Crunch In Austin
Canada Lags In Technology
Bell Asks To Kill Long-Distance Price Cuts
Italy Telecom Wins Bid For Russia's Phone System
Navigation By Corel
Canadian Internet Books
AOL Drops Restriction On Word "Breast"
Edupage In German
Does English Dominate The Internet?
LSI Logic's "Internet On A Chip"
24-Hour News Field Getting Crowded
NRC Calls For New Budgeting Process For R&D
Intuit To Offer Banking Services Over The Internet
UnGame Software
Motorola Does Chinese
Tokyo Exchange Says Internet's Too Fast
Netcom Spins Its Web In Canada
Quebec To Get Virtual Shopping
Survey Of Educational Leaders
Rx For Sick Buildings
Congress Wars On Cyber "Indecency"
Microsoft Flirts With Java; IBM Commits To Relationship
Online Services Should Take A Note From Cable
Linking Up For Distance Learning
Florida No. 1 In Computers In The Classroom
Internet Phone Has Pluses, Minuses
Loans By Phone
Software Keeps Trains On Track
Time Warner, AOL Target Health And Fitness
Signal-To-Noise :-)

COMPROMISE ON CYBERPORN LEGISLATION

The fears of online service providers and civil liberties advocates

that new federal telecommunications legislation would be too heavy-handed in its effort to keep "filthy," "lewd" and "indecent" material off of the network have been mitigated by compromise wording in the proposed legislation. The new language, offered by Washington State Republican congressman Rick White, restricts penalties of fine or imprisonment to persons who transmit material that is "harmful to children" (such as images of frontal nudity) rather than a more broadly worded target against making "indecent material" available to children. The compromise would give legal protection to online information and service providers who made good-faith efforts to keep restricted material away from children. (New York Times 2 Dec 95 A1)

INTERNET DEMAND EXCEEDS SUPPLY AT MANY SCHOOLS

Recent efforts by professors to make greater use of information technology in their course work have resulted in long lines at computer centers at many colleges across the country. One University of Texas at Austin student complained he has to wait a half hour or more to read his e-mail, and the lines are lengthening. "By the end of the semester, you've got people waiting three hours so they can type a term paper that's half their grade. Professors are requiring students to use the Internet more with their classes, but we're not getting more computers. It's becoming difficult to get your work done." Meanwhile, Bill Graves, associate provost at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, notes, "In one year's time, we've gone from 8,000 e-mail accounts to 26,000 e-mail accounts." Many university officials privately agree that the only solution is to require students to purchase their own computers, but with the pressure on to hold down tuition costs, they say it's impractical to suggest such changes now. (Chronicle of Higher Education 1 Dec 95 A31)

TALIGENT GOES THE WAY OF KALEIDA

IBM, Apple and Hewlett-Packard have agreed to dismantle Taligent Inc., their software joint venture, and transfer its technology to IBM. Apple and HP will retain rights to use Taligent's CommonPoint technology. Like Kaleida Labs, Taligent fell victim to conflicting agendas and differing product timetables within the parent companies. Of the three partners only IBM remained committed to using Taligent software in its products, while the others developed competing products as a hedge against Taligent's failure. (Wall Street Journal 1 Dec 95 B8)

WEB MAY ALLEVIATE HIGH-TECH OBSOLESCENCE

Just as a new generation of computers and software is driving an unprecedented wave of upgrades, industry observers are saying that the Web may put an end to this "treadmill of bigger, better, faster." Instead of waiting two years for the next huge update to a suite of business applications, software makers could distribute the latest features instantly over the Net. And just-in-time software will allow people to rent applications that they only use occasionally. "I really think that Windows 95 marked the zenith of the personal-computer industry," says Oracle CEO Larry Ellison. (Business Week 4 Dec 95 p78)

SUN PLANS JAVA-LIKE MICROKERNEL

Sun Microsystems is already working on a microkernel-like operating system to run low-tech "Internet appliances." Dubbed Java OS, Sun's chief technical officer Eric Schmidt calls it the "natural next step" for Java. The new software will "take the Java classes and put them on the minimum OS functionality you need. You can add additional functionality by writing in Java," he says. It will require only 4 to 8 Mbytes of memory, and will not support Windows applications or other programs that make large demands on system memory. "This thing doesn't come with Sound Blaster and speakers. If you need a PC, buy a PC," says Schmidt. (Information Week 4 Dec 95 p104)

EIA ENDORSES SMART-RADIO

The Electronics Industries Association is launching a \$1-million campaign to install hardware encoders that would allow specially equipped PCs to receive stereo radio along with digital text and data from

broadcasting stations in the top 25 radio markets in the U.S. "The EIA is taking the lead to make (Radio (Broadcast) Data System) a standard feature of U.S. radio broadcasting," says the president of the Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Association. "We plan to equip several hundred radio stations with the R (B) DS signal, reaching 85% of the American radio listening audience." (Broadcasting & Cable 27 Nov 95 p98)

KIDS ON THE WEB

A Jupiter Communications/Yahoo! survey posted on the Yahoo! Web site resulted in responses from 60,000 initial responses with in-depth feedback from 10,000 of those. Most of the respondents had been on the Internet for less than a year, with 85% saying they had some access from home. The average user was online about 20 hours a week. More than 4,000 of the respondents were under 18, with 84% of them male. These respondents were more likely to define themselves as online experts and heavy users of the Web. The highest percentages of online minors were found in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic states, and the fewest in the South Central states. More children are using the Internet in non-metropolitan areas than in large cities. The most popular online activity was surfing (35%), followed by e-mail (28%). (Digital Kids Report Nov 95 p1)

HIGH-TECH LABOR CRUNCH IN AUSTIN

If you're a techie looking for work, it might behoove you to head south -- to Austin, where the high-tech boom has led to a skilled labor shortage that threatens to spread to other Texas cities with a high concentration of technology industries, according to a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Although the shortages are forcing up wages for software engineers, computer programmers and lower-skilled manufacturing jobs, the companies don't seem to be "complaining too loudly," says one of the study's co-authors. "The companies are doing so well and are so optimistic about future growth, I don't think they mind as long as they get good employees." (BNA Daily Labor Report 29 Nov 95 A4)

CANADA LAGS IN TECHNOLOGY

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development warns that Canadians' living standards are threatened because of a failure by industry to innovate through science and technology, and by relying too much on low-tech industries. This week, the Ontario government, in its economic statement, abolished many of the provincial programs that support technology and export marketing partnerships with industry. (Toronto Star 1 Dec 95 E2)

BELL ASKS TO KILL LONG-DISTANCE PRICE CUTS

Seven of Canada's largest phone companies petitioned federal regulators to quash a set of three long-distance price reductions planned over the next two years, arguing that their very survival is at stake. (Toronto Globe & Mail 1 Dec 95 B5)

ITALY TELECOM WINS BID FOR RUSSIA'S PHONE SYSTEM

A \$639-million bid by Italy telecommunications company Stet (Societa Finanziaria Telefonica) to buy 25% of Russia's state phone system Svyazinvest has prevailed over a competing bid from a group made up of France Telecom, Deutsche Telekom, and a Russian unit of U S West. (New York Times 2 Dec 95 p17)

NAVIGATION BY COREL

Corel launched its info-highway navigator and expects to sell 100,000 units in December at \$24.95 each. With eight utilities, the CD-based Internet software includes a scanning tool to search through news groups, a web page update notifier which solves the hassle of having to check manually for updates, and a stock ticker which allows users to monitor the prices of up to five stocks. (Ottawa Sun 1 Dec 95 p58)

CANADIAN INTERNET BOOKS

Prentice Hall Canada has released two new Internet books for Canadians - the 1996 edition of the Canadian Internet Handbook and the 1996 Canadian Internet Directory. The 1996 Handbook includes a foreword by the Canadian Prime Minister and the results of a recent Angus Reid study on the

demographics of Internet users in Canada. The books are available in bookstores across Canada or by calling Prentice Hall Canada at 1-800-567-3800. A Web site has been set up for the books at <<http://www.handbook.com>>. (Toronto Globe and Mail 1 Dec 1995 A14).

AOL DROPS RESTRICTION ON WORD "BREAST"

America Online, which has been making efforts to police its own service by purging obscene or vulgar expressions deemed to be offensive, has changed its mind about the word "breast" and reinstated it as an acceptable term of discussion. A contributor to a breast cancer bulletin board had called the purging of the word breast "outrageous and potentially life-threatening." (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 2 Dec 95 F7)

EDUPAGE IN GERMAN

We are pleased to announce a German edition of Edupage, which will be produced and distributed by STERN magazine, Germany's largest general-interest weekly, as part of its online services. Welcome to our German-language readers of Edupage! Wir begruessen unsere deutschsprachigen Edupage-Leser! Um die deutsche Ausgabe von Edupage zu abonnieren, genügt eine E-Mail an: infomat@stern.de mit der Betreff- oder Textzeile "STERN Online Edupage". (In addition to English and German, Edupage is now available in French, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish versions.)

DOES ENGLISH DOMINATE THE INTERNET?

At the Francophonie summit in West Africa, French President Jacques Chirac contended the info-highway imperils the French language and culture and warned that the English threat on the Internet applies to Arab nations, Russia, India, China and Japan. Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien countered, however, that the French language "must make its own way or be left by the wayside." Microsoft CEO Bill Gates dismissed fears that the Internet will be dominated by English, emphasizing that pluralism is guaranteed by the nature of computer-information networks. (Toronto Globe & Mail 4 Dec 95 A1)

LSI LOGIC'S "INTERNET ON A CHIP"

LSI Logic has developed a new computer chip it's calling "Internet on a chip," which combines a Silicon Graphics microprocessor with electronic circuitry for digital signal processing, high-speed communications modems, video and audio transmission and 3-D graphics. The company hopes its new \$50 chip will be used as the brains for the so-called "\$500 Internet device" that's recently been touted by Oracle and Sun Microsystems. "I think companies will be rolling out boxes in the third quarter, and they will be the Cabbage Patch Doll sensation of Christmas 1996," says LSI's executive VP for product strategy. (Wall Street Journal 4 Dec 95 A3)

24-HOUR NEWS FIELD GETTING CROWDED

A week after Rupert Murdoch announced his intention to start a 24-hour news channel to compete with Turner Broadcasting's CNN, Capital Cities/ABC is expected to declare similar intentions. The new service, to debut sometime in 1997, will be delivered to viewers by a mix of cable, telephone or new technologies, according to people familiar with the situation. ABC's service is expected to carry more local news than CNN, provided by its 200-plus affiliate stations. (Wall Street Journal 5 Dec 95 A3)

NRC CALLS FOR NEW BUDGETING PROCESS FOR R&D

The National Research Council released a report Nov. 29 calling for a single budget that combines all sources of federal funding for science and technology projects, saying such a change is necessary if the U.S. is to remain the world leader in R&D. "Such a process would allow trade-offs to be made across agencies, programs, and research institutions, freeing funds for new initiatives by reducing or ending projects that have become a lower priority or for which there are better alternatives," says the report. For starters, NRC calls for changes in accounting procedures: "Almost half (of the annual federal R&D budget) is spent on activities -- such as establishing production lines and developing operational systems for new

aircraft and weapons systems -- that do not involve the creation of new knowledge or technologies." Eliminating funding for these activities would free up \$35- to \$40-billion a year for R&D. (BNA Daily Environment Report 30 Nov 95 A3)

INTUIT TO OFFER BANKING SERVICES OVER THE INTERNET

Financial software company Intuit, maker of Quicken, will offer banking over the Internet -- a shift from its previous strategy of using private networks to facilitate customer transactions with their banks. Microsoft is expected to announce a competing Internet banking strategy. (New York Times 5 Dec 95 C6)

UNGAME SOFTWARE

Irvine, Calif.-based DVD Software Inc. has a new product that takes the fun out of playing PC games at work. Called UnGame, the software finds and eliminates games on network servers and hard drives. It can identify 3,100 kinds of games, even when their file names have been disguised. DVD's president estimates game-playing at work costs the U.S. some \$50 billion a year in lost productivity, assuming 40 million users spend 30 minutes a week playing games, at an average cost of \$50 an hour. (Investor's Business Daily 4 Dec 95 A6)

MOTOROLA DOES CHINESE

Motorola has developed what it says is the first highly accurate Chinese-character recognizer. Its handwriting-recognition technology, which it hopes will open up Asia's potentially vast PC market, allows users to input 13,000 Chinese characters into Windows 95 programs. (Miami Herald 4 Dec 95 p35)

TOKYO EXCHANGE SAYS INTERNET'S TOO FAST

Because of "insider trading" restrictions that ban company officials and media representatives from dealing in securities for 12 hours after they learn earnings results, the Tokyo Stock Exchange wants companies to stop sending such results over the Internet right after they're announced in news conferences. (Financial Times 5 Dec 95 p8)

NETCOM SPINS ITS WEB IN CANADA

Netcom, the largest American Internet access provider, announced plans to take Bell Canada's new Sympatico Internet service head-on by the end of this month. The move could spell bad news for Bell, which is hyping its service as a way for computer neophytes to surf the Web, since Netcom has both financial clout and expertise to quickly become a major player. (Toronto Financial Post 5 Dec 95 p1)

QUEBEC TO GET VIRTUAL SHOPPING

Quebecor Multimedia and Cogeco Cable announced they will work together to develop and test a multimedia platform for a virtual shopping mall and other interactive applications. (Toronto Financial Post 5 Dec 95 p9)

SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

A survey by the Alliance for Converging Technologies of 2000 U.S. and Canadian executives in 10 industries (including 239 from education) found that 86% of the education leaders believe that multimedia and the information highway will redefine their sector, and 90% identify "absence of funds" as a barrier to success. The survey predicts a sharp rise in the number Internet users, from 5% of education staff today to 34% by 1997. (Info: act@actnet.com)

RX FOR SICK BUILDINGS

Canada's National Research Council and the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology have jointly developed new air-quality software to help architects and designers to calculate air quality before building construction begins, hopefully ending the recent plague of sick buildings. The program will measure airborne chemicals given off by construction materials and indoor furnishings, and how various changes in building design can affect them. (Toronto Globe & Mail 5 Dec 95 A12)

CONGRESS WARS ON CYBER "INDECENCY"

Rejecting compromise language more narrowly targeted to stop online

depiction of graphic sexual material that would be "harmful to minors," a House-Senate conference committee has agreed in principle on language that would prohibit transmission of all "indecent" material over computer networks. Penalties for offenders would include fines of up to \$100,000 and prison terms of up to five years for people who make such "indecent" material available to minors. Civil liberties groups have objected to the indecency standard because of its vagueness, and a spokesman for Prodigy calls it "problematic": "No one knows what it means. It's overbroad and it will be challenged in the court for years. In our view, it is a giant step backwards." The indecency standard covers words as well as images, and until now has been applied only to TV and radio broadcasting. The American Civil Liberties Union says the proposed law is a violation of First Amendment rights to free speech. (New York Times 7 Dec 95 A1)

MICROSOFT FLIRTS WITH JAVA; IBM COMMITS TO RELATIONSHIP

Microsoft is considering licensing Sun Microsystems' Java software, says Netscape CEO James Barksdale. "We believe Microsoft will probably adopt Java and JavaScript," Barksdale announced at a meeting in Aspen, Co. yesterday. Meanwhile, Microsoft CEO Bill Gates is a little more coy: "I'd say we haven't reached a firm conclusion on that. Java has certain merits." (Investor's Business Daily 7 Dec 95 A8, A9) But IBM has already decided to license Java, and plans to install it both in browsers and various operating systems, including Microsoft's Windows 3.1. A Sun spokesman said that "the fact that IBM would take on one big challenge that we haven't had time for is great news for us." (New York Times 7 Dec 95)

ONLINE SERVICES SHOULD TAKE A NOTE FROM CABLE

America Online Services' president says to be successful in tomorrow's online market, online providers should follow the example of cable companies, creating new content for niche services and offering them in low-cost packages. "It wasn't Rolling Stone that created MTV. It wasn't Sports Illustrated that created ESPN. It wasn't CBS that created CNN. It was young wild-eyed entrepreneurs that created new brands and mega franchises." In addition to new content, online providers should concentrate on fostering "community" -- "No one goes to a bar for a beer. They go for the bartender and the people at the bar you talk to." Finally, he joked that AOL's new ad slogan should be, "Just a little less pathetic than the other guys." (Broadcasting & Cable 4 Dec 95 p83)

LINKING UP FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

New alliances among regional educational institutions are paving the way for increased cooperation when it comes to distance learning. Last week the Western Governors Association met to discuss ways to promote distance education, including the possible establishment of a degree-granting "virtual university." "The word is getting out that everybody is expected to make these investments, and the more-progressive-thinking academic officers are saying, 'Let's look at what others are doing,'" says Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications director Sally Johnstone. (Chronicle of Higher Education 9 Dec 95 A21)

FLORIDA NO. 1 IN COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

A survey of 1,000 randomly selected elementary school teachers across the country shows Florida teachers ranking first in terms of using computers as part of the classroom instruction, with 73% using computers for teaching at least three hours per week, compared with 51% nationally. Florida also ranked first in training, with 68% of teachers receiving formal computer training, compared with a national average of 58%. Florida spends about 30% of its technology dollars on training, as opposed to a national average of about 4%. The survey was conducted by Denver, Co.-based Quality Education Data. (Miami Herald 6 Dec 95 A6)

INTERNET PHONE HAS PLUSES, MINUSES

A Consumer Reports review of VocalTec's Internet Phone software gives it high marks for value -- a long distance call is only the cost of a (usually) local call to an Internet access provider -- but cautions that the

ensuing conversation is a little different from one conducted over a telephone device: "Sound quality varied unpredictably, from good to badly garbled. The calls also entail a delay before you hear your caller respond. Transmissions are 'half-duplex': only one person can call at a time." (Consumer Reports Dec 95 p755)

LOANS BY PHONE

Unisys has a new product based on Natural Language Understanding technology that enables mortgage loan-seekers to receive most of the loan-related information they need via the telephone without talking to a human being. The system responds appropriately to different types of questions regarding the same topic; for instance the question "What is an adjustable rate mortgage?" would trigger a different response than "I'd like to apply for an adjustable rate mortgage." Several large banks are testing the system, which is scheduled for release next year. (Investor's Business Daily 7 Dec 95 A8)

SOFTWARE KEEPS TRAINS ON TRACK

Next month Union Pacific and the Burlington Northern Railroad Co. will test a satellite-based computer system to monitor locomotives' speed and location. The software flashes a warning to crew members when a train exceeds a safe speed, and if the advice is ignored, the system activates robotic technology to apply the brakes. When fully implemented, the system could save railroads \$30 million a year by preventing accidents caused by human error, plus whatever additional savings are realized through more efficient tracking by dispatchers. (Investor's Business Daily 6 Dec 95 A6)

TIME WARNER, AOL TARGET HEALTH AND FITNESS

Time Warner and America Online are forming a joint venture to develop an online service that focuses on health and fitness issues. The service will be available both on AOL and on the Web, and will provide access to healthcare experts and support groups, as well as information from Time's Cooking Light and Martha Stewart Living magazines. The new service will compete with similar offerings recently announced by IBM and AT&T. (Wall Street Journal 6 Dec 95 B3)

SIGNAL-TO-NOISE :-)

Internet World's new "Best and Worst of the Net" edition says: "The Net's signal-to-noise ratio may be deteriorating, but the amount of signal is still growing. Some excellent publications, such as Edupage and Innovation (innovation-request@NewsScan.com, with the message "subscribe"), are available only on the Net, and new information services like Newspaper and Ensemble are important steps towards truly personalized information services." (Internet World Jan 95 p46)

Edupage is written by John Gehl (gehl@educum.edu) & Suzanne Douglas (douglas@educum.edu).

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The next issue of Edupage will be 28 Nov 95.

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like the one on the counter at the dry cleaners with the sign "Ring bell for service"; or a small hand bell; or a cathedral bell; or a door bell; or a chime; or a glockenspiel. Your choice. But ring it!

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

The CAUSE organization's annual conference on information technology in higher education is scheduled for the end of this month in New Orleans. The conference will bring together administrators, academicians and other managers of information resources. For full conference information check out <<http://cause-www.colorado.edu>> or send e-mail to conf@cause.colorado.edu.

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A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N

Apple/Mac Section
John Deegan, Editor

ISDN Q & A STR Focus
on CIS

Good Information from the ISDN Forum

From the ISDN Forum on Compuserve

ISDN Information

Some good questions about ISDN..

Question:

The documents from IBM on the 7845 TA says it supports 5 call appearances. Does this mean I can have 5 unique telephone numbers on channel 2? How can I attach an analog phone, an analog fax and an analog modem all to channel 2 and have them all work correctly? Can you please give me a simple definition of call appearances vs. separate phone numbers vs distinctive ring?

Answer:

A simple definition probably starts with an explanation of the ISDN concept. In addition, it gives me an opportunity to climb upon my soap box and preach to all of you folks who view ISDN as nothing more than a slightly faster way of transmitting data. ISDN is a fundamental change in the way the telephone system functions at the end user level.

Telephone switches have evolved, over many years, from mechanical devices which physically connected wire pairs to very sophisticated computers programmed to switch telephone calls. During this period the analog telephone has remained basically the same device put into service on day one. The switches are capable of delivering a broad range of services which the analog phone is not capable of accepting due to its limited ability to "talk" to the switch.

ISDN introduces two new elements. The first element is the D-channel which allows the exchange of sophisticated command elements between the telephone and the switch. The second element is the digital set, which is in fact a computer programmed to be a telephone. ISDN allows us to create an environment in which a computer is speaking to a computer for the purpose of delivering telephone services.

Now to your questions.

The easiest way to understand the concept of a call appearance is to relate it to the call waiting service which is available to you on an analog phone. You have a phone number, which in ISDN terms would be your Primary Dial Number (PDN). If you are active on the phone, and someone attempts to call you the switch will check your line, determine that it is busy, and signal the calling party that your number is busy. You have one Call Appearance (CA) of your PDN in the network. If you subscribe to call waiting the switch checks your line and signals ringing to the calling party, while advising you of another incoming call by breaking into your active call with a short burst of dialtone. If you want to accept the call you signal the switch, with a short depression of the hookswitch on your phone, and the switch puts your first call on hold in the switch and cuts the new call through to your phone. Call waiting creates a second appearance of your PDN in the network. In ISDN terms you have two CAs of your PDN.

ISDN capable switches can provide between six (DMS100) and 16 (5ESS) CAs of a single DN. An ISDN telephone provides you with multiple buttons, indicator LEDs, and an LCD display to aid you in managing these multiple CAs. The 7845 will provide you with 5 CAs of a single DN on one of your analog ports. You are limited by the signaling capabilities of your analog set and your ability to effectively manage more than two CAs will be limited (unless you have a pad of paper next to the phone and keep very good notes).

Distinctive ringing is an attempt to provide additional DNs associated with the same physical wire pair. In the ISDN world we would refer to these additional DNs as Secondary Dial Numbers (SDN). In the analog world we indicate the various DNs by changing the ringing pattern generated on the wire pair. The call processing element (you or your distinctive ring switch)

makes a decision based on the ringing pattern and processes the call appropriately. Analog signaling usually limits you to three ringing patterns or in ISDN terms one PDN and two SDNs. An ISDN switch can provide between 64 (DMS100) and 256 (5ESS) DN assignments to a single wire pair. The usable amount is limited by the telco tariff and the number of buttons available on an ISDN set.

The majority of my work involves designing and implementing multi-station ISDN centrex systems for office environments. I have not worked with the 7845 so I can only answer your questions in general terms. The ISDN switch is capable of providing the DNs and the signaling necessary to accomplish what you wish. I do not know if the 7845 is capable of translating these D-channel messages into the analog signals necessary to accomplish your needs.

If the 7845 is capable of generating distinctive rings on one of its analog ports based on the incoming DN then you could attach your analog devices just as you would to an analog line. You would need to associate each analog port with a unique PDN and SPID to direct the SDNs to the proper port. You can have the multiple CAs but managing the calls will be difficult.

A better approach would be to attach an additional ISDN TA to the S/T port on the 7845. (This approach will require three SPIDs and can only be supported by a 5ESS or Siemens EWSD.) You could then have your FAX on one of the analog ports, your phone on another, and the modem operating through the additional TA. You only have two B-channels so only two of the devices could be active at the same time. Each device could have a unique DN for call management.

The 7845 is an attempt to accommodate existing technology in a changing world. As with all accommodations, it has its limits. I hope the above is a help to you. If you have additional questions, please ask.

Question:

COULD someone explain SPID to me ?

Answer:

An ISDN interface consists of an NT1 connected to the telephone company and up to eight unique devices connected to the NT1. Each of these devices is intelligent and needs a way to sort out messages intended for itself as opposed to the other seven devices. The addressing concept is similar to that used on a LAN. All messages have an destination address for a specific device, are heard by all devices, but are responded to by the device with the matching address. The Service Profile ID (SPID) provides the mechanism for the telco switch to initialize and manage this addressing scheme.

SPID formats vary between protocols and telcos but are always built around the telephone number associated with a specific device (If a single physical device has more than one interface it might use one SPID per interface). The telco will tell you what the proper SPID or SPIDs are for your ISDN line and you must enter the SPIDs into the appropriate devices.

As soon as you attach your ISDN device to the phone line the switch will sense its presence and request that it transmit its SPID. The switch will examine its data base and assign the subscribed services to the device that you have just connected. It will go through an initialization dialog with the ISDN terminal and set up the necessary addressing scheme for the device.

One of the concepts behind the development of the SPID was service portability. Some of the ISDN switches have the ability to automatically reassign services to different wire pairs based on reading the SPID transmitted by a newly connected device. This service is not active on any switch that I am aware of. A simple example of this would be moving from cube to cube in an office. You would disconnect your ISDN phone from your existing location and plug it into your new location. The switch would then

recognize the fact that you had changed wire pairs and automatically reassign your phone number and subscribed services to your new location. The concept can work equally well for residential moves.

The reason that it is not active is that the interface between the CO switches and the Telco maintenance systems is not very good. The switches do not automatically update the maintenance systems and if Automatic Service Reassignment (ASR) were allowed the Telco would lose track of where your phone was physically located. You would place a trouble call and the service rep would be sent to the wrong location to repair the wrong circuit. I suspect we will see ASR eventually as a cost cutting measure for the Telcos.

Hope the above answers your questions.

Raymond Oschger & Associates, 708-292-0192, ISDN Application Design & Maintenance.

Editor Note;

Normally, I find myself glossing over explanations. But the above answers to the question were so eloquently done with such precise clarity. I couldn't resist. Raymond Oschger frequents the ISDN Forum on Compuserve, if you have a question about or relative to ISDN stop by and have an informative chat. GO ISDN.

Kids Computing Corner
Frank Sereno, Editor

NFL Math
separate CD-ROM & floppy versions for Windows and Macintosh

ages 8 to 12
suggested retail \$39.95
from Sanctuary Woods
1825 South Grant
San Mateo, California 94402
415-286-6110

Program Requirements

IBM		Macintosh	
CPU:	486	CPU:	Color
Macintosh			
RAM:	8 megs	RAM:	5 megs
OS:	Windows 3.1	OS:	System 7.0
Video:	640 by 480 with 256 colors	Video:	256
Hdisk:	8 megs	Hdisk:	?

CD-ROM: Double-speed recommended
recommended

CD-ROM: Double-speed

Misc.: Sound card, printer optional

by Frank Sereno

The crowd cheers as the teams break from their huddles. Anticipation builds as the play is about to begin...but first a math question? NFL Math attempts the difficult merger of a graphically-intense football simulation with a math instruction program. The result is a completion that will involve fathers and children in a fun and absorbing learning experience but comes up short of being a touchdown.

Children are given the task of answering math and trivia questions. In addition, they must guide their football team to victory. If they can win six games in a row on the Road to the Super Bowl, then they will receive a free Super Bowl ring from Sanctuary Woods. The game has math questions in four categories with four levels of difficulty. Rapid Fire consists of a timed round of mental math problems. Brain Teasers are word problems. Charting and graphing problems are presented in Stats & Stuff. Numbers and concepts are learned in Number Fun. To keep the learning fun, a trivia category is also available. Answers to the trivia questions can be researched in the player and trivia databases. The player information is presented as football cards which can be printed.

The program features a point-and-click interface. The main screen has several options. The Pre-Game Show is actually a complete guided tour of the program which includes directions for playing. Game Controls allows the player to set difficulty levels, to play a single game or Road to the Super Bowl series, length of quarter and choose sound options. The player can choose to Resume Game or Start New Game. The Coach's Corner has a listing of all the math concepts covered in the program. Click on a category and the coach will explain the concept while an animation is shown on his blackboard.

The football simulation is very rudimentary. Players only have a few play selections. Success depends on correctly answering the math questions and on the powerbar ratings for the team. Offenses are rated on running, passing and blocking while defenses are rated on run defense, passing defense and tackling. These skills can be increased by playing Powerup games before the game and between quarters. These games require moving a character on the screen using the cursor keys and using the spacebar as a fire button. The control is very imprecise and would have benefited from joystick or mouse control.

After a play is chosen, then the player must answer the math or trivia question. Once that is done, the play's results will be shown in a dramatic animation. NFL Math has 33,000 play animations to keep your child's interest. End zone celebrations and circus catches are among the visuals included. The animations can be replayed in reverse or forward motion.

NFL Math features 3D rendered animations and animations to provide an eye-pleasing experience. A shortcoming is that the animations do not feature authentic uniforms and helmets. The animations are also displayed in a small window which is disappointing. The sounds are first-rate. The voice samples are very good and also include a bit of "trash-talking" (g-rated, of course) to lend the game intensity and authenticity. The music used is similar to that used in NFL television broadcasts.

The interface is very simple and easy to use. The guided tour is very helpful for new players. The manual is very brief but it is sufficient. Troubleshooting information is included in a readme file included with the program. A mouse would be a better input device for the powerup games rather than the cursor keys.

Play value will depend upon your child's interest in football and his level of expertise. If he is far advanced in playing football either electronically or physically, he will probably be disappointed in the lack

of complexity of the football simulator. Children who like football but who are just learning about its intricacies will find this program quite appealing.

Educational value is good. A greater variety of questions would have increased the value. Also, practice problems in the Coach's Corner would be a good addition. Perhaps more than one example of each concept could have been presented to ensure the child understood it.

NFL Math should sell for between \$30 and \$35. Sanctuary Woods backs it with a 30-day, no questions asked moneyback guarantee. Trying this program is virtually risk-free. The program also qualifies for Sanctuary Woods' "Buy One, Give One" program which allows your local school system to get a copy of the program for the cost of shipping and handling. If you have a young football fan, NFL Math is a good choice.

Ratings

Graphics	9.0
Sounds	9.0
Interface	9.0
Play Value	8.0
Educational Value ..	8.0
Bang for the Buck ..	8.5
Average	8.58

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EARTHWORM JIM ZAPS ONTO COMPUTER DESKTOPS

Upcoming Windows 95 Title Includes Unique Customizing Feature

Los Angeles, CA - Avid fans of Earthworm Jim can customize their computer desktops using a unique accessory package which will be a key feature of Activision's upcoming Windows 95 title, Earthworm Jim. One of the first games ever to include desktop theme capability, Earthworm Jim is slated for a December release.

An enhancement for Microsoft Plus, the Earthworm Jim desktop will bring the game's wacky sense of humor to everyday computing tasks. Users can wallpaper their desktops with Jim's cybernetic physique; select a rotating Jim icon to replace the Windows 95 standard hourglass animated cursor; use Jim's rapid-fire ray gun as a mouse pointer; choose the quirky Jim cow as the Network icon; discard files into a can-of-worms Recycle icon; and be greeted by the bleat of sheep when they start Windows 95.

Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. c 1995
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c 1994 Shiny Entertainment, Inc. Characters created by Doug Ten Napel.
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Edmark Introduces Strategy Games of the World
Innovative New Educational Software
That Helps 8 to 14 Year Olds Develop
Problem-Solving Strategies for Everyday Life

REDMOND, WA - Edmark Corporation, a leading developer of educational software for children, today announced the shipment of Strategy Games of the

World, innovative new educational software designed to help 8 to 14 year olds develop a variety of problem-solving strategies they can use every day. Centered around three classic games that are fun and easy to learn- Mancala, Nine Men's Morris and Go-Moku-. Strategy Games of the World also features inspiring strategy-building components including interactive Strategy Coaches, Real World Videos, Multimedia Game Guides and more. Strategy Games of the World is available on CD-ROM for Windows 95, Windows 3.1 and Macintosh computers. As a limited time introductory offer, customers who purchase the product will receive any other award-winning Edmark title free. "We are thrilled to offer 8 to 14 year olds an unprecedented educational software program that will help them build a rich personal set of strategies they can use to solve problems in academic subjects and throughout life," says Sally Narodick, Edmark CEO. "Timeless games that have taught strategies for centuries provide the venue for kids to encounter and practice a variety of problem-solving strategies. Educators often say that when kids know a number of ways to solve a problem they will persist, try those strategies and greatly increase their chance of success; that is the ultimate goal of this program, to help kids learn new ways to solve problems successfully throughout their lives."

Three Classic Games That Teach Lifelong Strategies

At the heart of this program is a collection of three fascinating and engaging games. Games offer kids highly interactive and goal-directed forms of play in a rich and motivating environment where they can encounter, practice and master strategies. The educators at Edmark carefully selected Mancala, Nine Men's Morris and Go-Moku because these games can be learned quickly, they can be played at many levels of challenge, they do not involve chance and they've stood the test of time- challenging players for thousands of years.

These games, and the program's additional features, help kids learn to:

- '• Identify and analyze problems
- '• Look for patterns and sequences
- '• Plan ahead
- '• Predict outcomes
- '• Eliminate options known to be incorrect
- '• Test hypotheses
- '• Break problems into smaller parts that can be solved individually

Go-Moku: Brought to Japan from China almost 1500 years ago, Go-Moku is a variation of Go, which has had a profound impact on Japanese life, influencing religion, philosophy and popular culture. Go is played and enjoyed by millions of people around the world.

In Go-Moku, players quickly scan the board and find ways to place five pieces in a row before the opposition. The first player to get five stones in a row- horizontally, vertically or diagonally- wins the game. Complex and interrelated patterns emerge as skilled players learn to balance offensive and defensive moves and to create intricate webs of control. With as many as 324 pieces in play at one time, it's essential to learn which information to use and which to ignore.

Nine Men's Morris: The earliest traces of Nine Men's Morris were found in Egypt; game boards have also been found in the ruins of Troy, Sri Lanka, Stone-Age Ireland and in England, carved into cathedral pews. This game challenges kids to shift and adapt strategic frameworks. Kids need one set of strategies when placing pieces at the beginning of the game and a very different set when they move pieces to block or capture their opponent. The game can be won in two ways: by capturing all but two of the opponent's pieces or by blocking the opponent from being able to move.

Mancala: This is the name given to a family of board games played throughout Africa, the Middle East and the South Pacific. Thousands of variations of this game are played. In Africa, Mancala boards often reflect the handiwork

of the tribal culture, and some are revered as religious artifacts. This fine craftsmanship is reflected in the product's game board scenes and is also depicted and explained in depth in the Multimedia Game Guide, a multimedia presentation that lets kids sample the rich cultural history of each game. The ambient sounds in the background of Mancala, make players feel as if they've traveled thousands of miles away to play.

Mancala provides kids with a pure exercise in strategic thinking. In this game, players' own positions instead of pieces. Kids use a range of strategies to put stones in the board positions around the board. The board is simple enough to allow players to fully think through each move; however, the board state can change immediately as players open holes, capture stones and distribute stones around the board. The game is over when all the stones are gone from one player's side of the board. Whoever has the most stones wins.

Many Levels of Challenge and Strategy in Every Game

Game Masters: Nine Game Masters challenge kids in Mancala, Nine Men's Morris and Go-Moku with different playing styles and strategies of their own. As kids compete against the Game Masters at any level of difficulty, they learn a variety of strategies, develop and test their own and eventually build the personal strategies that works best for them.

Challenge Levels: Similar to the Grow Slides in Edmark's award-winning Thinkin' Things Series, the Challenge Levels in Strategy Games of the World automatically advance as kids win games. As they advance several levels, the screen changes to a new scene and a new opponent. There are many levels of difficulty in each game.

Strategy Coaches: If kids ever need advice, they can simply click on their Strategy Coach. Strategy Coaches provide tips, help kids learn the rules of the games and offer alternate strategies. When the Strategy Coaches look especially excited or anxious, it means they have something to say!

Applying Strategies to Everyday Life

Real-World Videos: Strategy Games of the World includes more than 80 video examples of how people from all walks of life use strategies to solve problems in their daily lives. These Real-World Videos include an astronaut, a marathon runner, and a television news anchorperson and many others who talk about their personal strategies. For example, a doctor says her strategy is to take all the information from a patient first, then eliminate extraneous information and pay attention only to what is pertinent to making a medical diagnosis. Kids will find some of these strategies helpful when devising their own set to use whenever they face a problem.

Historical and Cultural Information about the Games

Multimedia Game Guides: Included with Mancala, Nine Men's Morris and Go-Moku is a Multimedia Game Guide that lets kids sample each game's rich cultural history. In the guides, complete with beautiful, high-quality graphics and sound, kids will learn about the Vikings, Viking artifacts, the Maasai tribe of Africa, Japanese culture and more.

Insights for Parents

With Edmark's special Dear Parents Video Presentation, parents get helpful insights into the educational framework of the program. Edmark Vice President Donna Stanger, award-winning software designer and a teacher for twenty years, shares thoughts about the use of strategies, building a personal set of strategies and the three games in Strategy Games of the World.

System Requirements

Windows System Requires: Windows 3.1 (enhanced mode), Windows 95 or later; 8 MB of RAM required; CD-ROM drive (double-speed or faster recommended); 486DX/33MHZ (or better); Super VGA, 640 x 480 (256 colors required); Hard drive; Mouse; Windows-compatible sound-output device. Optional: Edmark TouchWindow.

Macintosh System Requires: Color Macintosh (256 colors required); 8 MB RAM; CD-ROM drive (double-speed or faster recommended); System 7.0.1 or higher;

Hard drive; 13" monitor or larger. Optional: Edmark TouchWindow.

Product Availability

Strategy Games of the World is available at major software retailers and through software catalogs for approximately \$40. For a limited time, customers who purchase the product will receive any award-winning Edmark title free. For more information, interested customers may call Edmark's Customer Service Department at 206-556-8484.

Edmark Corporation, located in Redmond, Washington, is a leading developer and publisher of educational software and materials, with 25 years of experience applying proven educational concepts to the development of educational products for children. The award-winning line of educational software includes: KidDesk Family Edition, Millie's Math House, Bailey's Book House, Sammy's Science House, Trudy's Time & Place House, Thinkin' Things Collection 1, Thinkin' Things Collection 2, Thinkin' Things Collection 3 and the Imagination Express Series.

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Read, Write & Type
CD-ROM for Windows or Mac
Ages 6-8
Estimated Retail Price:\$60.00
The Learning Company
6493 Kaiser Drive
Fremont, CA 94555
(800) 852-2255

Program Requirements

IBM		Macintosh	
CPU:	486/25MHz or better	CPU:	68040 or better
RAM:	4 megs	RAM:	4 megs
OS:	Windows 3.1	OS:	System 7.0.1
Video:	640 by 480 with 256 colors	Video:	256 colors
Hdisk:	1.4 MB	Hdisk:	?
CD-ROM:	Double-speed	CD-ROM:	Double-speed
Misc.:	Sound card		

by Angelo Marasco

What do you want your children to learn today? You want them to learn phonics? You want them to do some reading? You want them to learn a little typing? You want them to get a little more familiar with your computer and pick up a few useful computer skills in the process? Well, they can accomplish all of this and have a ton of fun doing it if they are using "Read, Write & Type" on CD by The Learning Company.

Although the first word that comes to mind when I think about "Read, Write & Type" is WOW!, I can't base a whole review on that one word. But WOW! is what describes this program best. I was simply amazed by its quality

of sound, graphics and content from the moment I first started the program. Normally for me, \$60 is a little pricey for a program for my computer. After I finished running this program for my review, I began to wonder how \$60 covers so much!

Installation was simple and the program set up an icon in a program group called "The Learning Company." There was no "help" or "important information" icon installed in the program group so I was a little concerned about problems that might arise. No such problems ever popped up. The operation of the program was smooth, with absolutely no glitches or crashes. The only concern I had was that the loading times for different activities were a little excessive. Since the program is constantly changing activities, this can begin to get a little nerve-wracking after a while. Perhaps it runs more quickly on a computer with 8 MB of RAM. Mine only has 4 MB for now.

The program opens with a "virtual computer" on the screen and the appearance of the "helping hands," Lefty LaDee and Rightway McKay. They will stay with the child through the entire program, helping him or her by explaining what is required in an exercise. They will show what keys must be used, come to the rescue if the wrong key is pressed or congratulate the child for successfully completing an exercise. The exercises are fairly short and are varied, which keeps the attention level very high. Lefty and Rightway nearly always have smiles and their voices are always cheerful. When keyboard activity stops for several minutes, they do several amusing things, like falling asleep or whistling. Rightway's voice is reminiscent of Jimmy Durante's.

At the start of the program, Lefty and Rightway introduce the keyboard and the storytellers who live in each key. In the background is "Home City," which contains all of the activities that the child will experience while using the program. This is the main screen for the program.

The keyboard is split by right-hand and left-hand keys and the two halves are dressed up as houses. This makes it easy for the child to figure out which hand will be used for each key. There are twenty-six storytellers, far too many for me to list in this review. Rest assured that each is interesting and attractive to children.

At this point we are introduced to "Vexor the Virus." He is a nasty little green character who is reminiscent of Oscar the Grouch of Sesame Street fame. His attitude is grumpy and he always looks upset. Vexor immediately scares the storytellers, causing them to close their window shades. Then Vexor steals the sounds from all the keys. Vexor states in no uncertain terms that he hates stories and he will not return the sounds unless the helping hands play a game with him in which they have to type the sounds. Since the helping hands aren't real and, therefore, can't type, they invite the child to do the typing for them. From the very beginning the child is made a part of the story.

The basic pattern throughout the program is the same. Vexor produces a stolen sound, then the child follows him to one of three places: the theater, the video store or the fair booth. Vexor usually requires the child to go through a combination of two places to get the sound back. This way the child gets to play with the sound in the beginning, middle or end of a word. After the child successfully saves the sound from Vexor, the sound returns to the keyboard house where the child replaces the sound on its proper key. Then Lefty and Rightway introduce the storyteller associated with that key. The storyteller leaves for the Story Tree but must cross the playground, tea garden, topiary garden, lake or rose garden to get there. Vexor is waiting with typing exercises, hoping to block the storyteller from reaching the tree. After successfully completing the typing exercises, the storyteller makes it to the tree and the child must type the names of pictures which the storyteller thinks about. After this, the story begins.

The stories the storytellers tell are typed by the child. A pleasant voice tells the child what to type and simultaneously the words are typed

out. Then the child types those letters, words and, eventually, sentences, depending on the level the child is at. After the story is told and animated, the storyteller returns to the keyboard house it lives in with its written story in hand. The child returns that storyteller to its rightful home and the game continues.

Let's look at the game in a little more detail. In the theater, Vexor shows the child pictures. If the picture starts with the featured sound, then the child types that letter. If the picture does not start with that sound, then the child types a space. When the child wins, Vexor loses his temper and something bad inevitably happens to him.

In the video store, the sound must come in the middle of the word for it to be typed. Vexor shows his pictures. If the sound does not come in the middle of the word then the space key is typed. Again, as in the theater, Vexor loses his temper when he loses and he pays for it.

At the fair booth, the sound always comes at the end of the word. Vexor again shows pictures. If the featured sound comes at the end of that word then the letter is typed. If the sound does not come at the end of the word then the space bar is pressed.

These three exercises serve a double purpose. First, they teach phonics. Second, they are typing exercises. The child is typing either the letter or sound combination or a space. Now, I don't know about you, but when I learned to type, my first exercises were to find a key, then type it in a series with spaces between. This program uses what I would characterize as "stealth learning." The child never knows that he or she is learning to type!

After beating Vexor at this activity, the sound returns to the keyboard house and the child places it in the proper key. The window shade opens and the storyteller is revealed. Lefty and Rightway introduce the storyteller and send it off to the Story Tree to tell its story. However, to get to the Story Tree the storyteller must safely cross through the playground. In later levels this changes to a tea garden, topiary garden, lake and, eventually, a rose garden. These backdrops are colorful, interesting and a pleasure to see, especially the rose garden.

In this exercise the child must type the words or phrases given them. Where the first activities helped to build phonics and basic typing skills, this activity begins to build more advanced typing skills. Here, Vexor waits at the end of the three screens for the child to make a typing mistake. Make enough mistakes and the storyteller gets blown back to the beginning. If a mistake is made, a "back arrow" appears which gives the child the chance to redo the exercise with no mistakes. After successfully crossing the screen, Vexor blows off stage. If the child gets the storyteller across with no mistakes, Vexor has a little virus fit which always costs him in the end.

Now comes the Story Tree. But before the storyteller will share its story, the child must type the names of several pictures. This is a great vocabulary builder. The nice thing is that, if the child doesn't know what the picture is, they need only click on it with the mouse and a pleasant voice tells them what it is.

At the Story Tree, the storyteller is featured in a little animated story that runs for four lines. The narrator narrates a line of the story while the program types it out. Then the child is asked to type the line in. As the child advances through the levels and saves more sounds, the stories become more complex and begin to rhyme. Initially the stories are a little lame, but what can you expect when you're trying to tell a story with one or two letters?

After successfully completing the Story Tree activity, the storyteller returns to the keyboard house with its typed story in hand. It's really neat to think that the storyteller is holding what the child has typed! The child now places the storyteller back in its key where it does a little animated trick before settling down.

I was a little upset with the fact that, at this point, the animation

lags behind the sound enough to be very noticeable. The same is true of the sound and image for the helping hands and Vexor. It is obvious that someone at The Learning Company went to a great amount of trouble to make the helping hands and Vexor shape every sound and word properly with their mouths. To me, it is a crime that the sound and animation don't stay together. It's like watching a movie with a poorly synchronized sound track. It may be that it's the fault of my slower 486SX33, but my computer does meet the minimum requirements for the program to run. I would expect such an expensive piece of software to perform flawlessly.

After the show is over, the letter or letter combination is shown on the "Hall of Fame." After four sounds are saved, the Hall of Fame produces an award that the child can print if he or she chooses. In all there are ten levels. It is a lot of work to complete all ten levels and I think that this keeps the program challenging enough to hold the child's interest for extended periods. At the same time, the levels are fairly short, having only four sounds in each. This makes the levels short enough so that the child won't lose interest by being bogged down in a long, drawn-out game that never seems to end.

In level two, things really begin to get interesting. First, construction begins on the "E-mail Tower" after the first sound is saved on this level. Construction ends at the completion of level three. Second, the "Bonus Blimp" appears after the second sound is saved.

The E-mail Tower turned out to be a really exciting innovation. When its construction is completed, it becomes a place where the child can write stories and letters and communicate with the whole "world." This activity fosters creativity and gives the child a reason to create written works. The E-mail Tower contains a simple word processor with many normal word processor commands and e-mail capability. The first time the child enters the E-mail Tower, they are taken on a tour that explains how to open, write, save and send an e-mail letter. The child also receives an e-mail letter back from the country that their e-mail is sent to.

Now, parents, don't panic! The e-mail isn't really being sent! Your phone bill isn't about to put you into bankruptcy! The E-mail Tower sends the completed work to its virtual radar dish where the letter is sent to a virtual satellite which sends the letter to a randomly chosen country. Then a return e-mail letter is received, which the child opens and reads. The program contains 84 different e-mail letters written by real children. One interesting thing about the E-mail Tower is that it won't allow the child to write a very short letter and send it or to re-send a letter which has already been e-mailed. This activity requires thought and creativity by the child.

The E-mail Tower activity operates at three different reading levels: first grade, second grade and third grade and up. The level is adjustable from what is called POP, the Program Options Pad. POP is always available from the Home City screen. It is also used to sign in new players, to enable or disable the printer, to show a short document on the educational benefits of the program, to exit the program and to show the keyboard. From the keyboard option the child can see the names of all the storytellers and can see the "power-up" positions of Lefty and Rightway. The power-up position is the home position on the keyboard for a typist's hands.

The Bonus Blimp allows the child to choose a vowel, letter combination or storyteller to use. The selection is then used by the program to pick an activity for the child to go through again. Successful completion earns the child points which are displayed on the certificate for that level. I suppose that it could be associated with "extra credit" work.

Last, but not least, is the "Power Fountain." The Power Fountain helps the child to improve typing accuracy and speed. This is another activity whose level is adjustable through POP. The Power Fountain is a really amusing activity. Here, Vexor the Virus is seated on a swing above a water fountain. The child must type words or phrases accurately and with enough

speed to keep the water flowing. If the child types accurately and quickly enough, nasty, but amusing, things happen to Vexor. This continues for as long as the timer is running. At higher levels the timer runs longer and the words and phrases are bigger and longer.

From the Home City screen the child can click on any area and take part in that activity or exercise. Not having to constantly follow the routine creates more interest. No matter how interesting a program is, it can get boring real fast if the child has to constantly follow a routine. Lefty and Rightway actually counsel the child occasionally to "cool their jets" and to take some time out for other activities in the program.

Overall, I found "Read, Write and Type" to be an exciting, colorful, rich program that should hold the attention of children for a long time. My seven year old lit up when I first ran the program and the opening story. My nine year old fired the program up every day for a week after school and we had trouble peeling him from the computer long enough for me to do this review. Even my twelve-year-old enjoyed the program. I certainly know that I enjoyed using it and never grew tired of it.

The graphics are absolutely fantastic. I didn't rate them a perfect ten is because of the delays I experienced when the sounds really needed to match up to the movements. However, most of the time they ran closely enough that it didn't make a difference. Plus, the extent that The Learning Company must have gone to make sure that Lefty, Rightway and Vexor formed their sounds properly deserved better than the 9.0 I would have given them otherwise.

The program is loaded with a variety of high quality sounds that make the experience of playing with this program a real pleasure. The sounds are very accurate and realistic. For instance, at one point Hug the Hamster is bouncing in his plastic travel ball in the back of Will the Wagon. You can actually hear the sound of a plastic ball bouncing in a metal wagon! Authenticity like this deserves a great rating.

The interface also deserves a high rating. My children could use the program with no help from me. Lefty LaDee and Rightway McKay are helpful and always present to jump in and help or amuse. Everything was easily understandable.

Play value also deserves a high rating. The program is not only educational but is a lot of fun. Children don't learn very well when they're falling asleep. That will never happen with this program. There are plenty of activities that are attractive to children. The only problem I had with the program was that I would have liked to see the Bonus Blimp use different activities or even some type of game rather than repeat the exercises. However, I suspect that there is some good reason for the Bonus Blimp to use the same exercises so I saw no reason for the play value rating to be lower.

There is no question about the educational value of the program. I don't see any reason that a young child cannot learn something from it. I expect my children to learn a lot from it and have already seen a difference in the way they approach and use the keyboard.

"Read, Write and Type" deserves a very high bang for the buck rating. There is a lot packed into this CD. I don't think that I saw everything that this program has to offer. It just keeps coming up with new surprises, new pictures and new sounds. I am sure that my children will not tire of this program anytime soon.

I can definitely recommend "Read, Write and Type" for your children. You'll know you made the right purchase when you see their faces light up!

Ratings

Graphics	9.9
Sounds	10.0
Interface	9.9
Play Value	9.9
Educational Value ..	10.0

Bang for the Buck .. 9.5
Average 9.86

#

That wraps up another edition of the Kids' Computing Corner. Please send any comments or suggestions to fsereno@matrix.uti.com. Angelo and I would sincerely like to thank you for reading.

Portable Computers & Entertainment Section
Marty Mankins, Editor

SONY PLAYSTATION

Game Listings

(38 Titles - Updated 12/01/95)
(c)1995 John Ricciardi

This is a complete listing of all Sony PlayStation games that have been released to date. Updated frequently. Any comments, e-mail me at <75162.2212@compuserve.com>.

NEW ADDITIONS SINCE 11/30/95
-Criticom (Vic Tokai/Fighting Action)
-CyberSpeed (Mindscape/Racing)
-NHL Face Off (SCEA/Sports)

Title Rating	Publisher	#/Players	Genre
3D Lemmings K-A	Psygnosis	1	Puzzle
Agile Warrior F-IIIX Shooter T	Virgin		1-2
Air Combat K-A	Namco	1-2	Shooter
Battle Arena Toshinden T	SCEA	1-2	Fighting Action
Criticom T	Vic Tokai	1-2	Fighting Action
CyberSpeed K-A	Mindscape	1	Racing
Cyber Sled K-A	Namco	1-2	Action
Defcon 5 A	Data East	1	Action K-

Destruction Derby	Sony Interactive	1-2	Racing	
K-A				
Discworld	Sony Interactive	1	Adventure	T
DOOM	Williams	1-2	Action	M
ESPN Extreme Games	SCEA	1-2	Racing	
K-A				
FIFA Soccer '96	Electronic Arts	1-8	Sports	
K-A				
Jumping Flash!	SCEA	1	Action	
K-A				
KILLEAK: The DNA Imperative	SCEA	1-2	Action	T
Mortal Kombat 3	SCEA	1-2	Fighting Action	
M				
NBA JAM T.E.	Acclaim	1-4	Sports	K-
A				
NFL GameDay	SCEA	1-2	Sports	K-A
NHL Face Off	SCEA	1-2	Sports	
K-A				
Novastorm	Sony Interactive	1	Shooter	
K-A				
Off-World Interceptor Extreme	Crystal Dynamics	1-2		
Action				M
PGA Tour '96	Electronic Arts	1-4	Sports	
K-A				
Power Serve 3D Tennis	Ocean	1-2	Sports	
K-A				
Rayman	Ubi Soft	1	Action	K-A
Ridge Racer	Namco	1	Racing	
K-A				
Space Griffon VF-9	Atlus	1	Action	
K-A				
Street Fighter: The Movie		1-2	Fighting	
Action				T
Tekken	Namco	1-2	Fighting Action	
T				
The Raiden Project	SCEA	1-2	Shooter	K-
A				
Theme Park	Bullfrog	1	Simulation	K-
A				
Total Eclipse Turbo	Crystal Dynamics	1		
Shooter				K-A
Twisted Metal	SCEA	1-2	Action	T
Viewpoint	Electronic Arts	1		
Shooter				K-A
Warhawk	SCEA	1	Shooter	K-
A				
Wipeout	Psygnosis	1-2	Racing	K-
A				
WrestleMania: The Arcade Game	Acclaim	1-2	Action	
K-A				
X-COM: UFO Defense	MicroProse	1	Strategy	K-A
Zoop	Viacom Newmedia	1	Puzzle	
K-A				

ESRB Ratings are as follows:

EC Early Childhood (Ages 3+)
K-A Kids to Adult (Ages 6+)
T Teen (Ages 13+)
M Mature (Ages 17+)

AO Adults Only (Adults Only)

For more information on ratings, please call the ESRB at 1-800-771-3772

For the record.

Sony Sells Over 300,000 Playstation Units

More Than One Million Pieces of Software Sold In Six Weeks Since Debut

Sony Computer Entertainment America (SCEA) has announced that 300,000 Sony PlayStation game consoles have been sold since the system's landmark introduction on September 9 of this year. Additionally, high software sales of more than one million game titles have resulted in an unprecedented 4:1 tie ratio (four titles per game console).

"This is phenomenal news -- exciting for everyone involved in the launch of the PlayStation, especially our retailers and consumers," said Jim Whims, senior vice president, SCEA. "Several retailers are still in a sold-out situation, and demand for software continues to increase as the installed base grows. Our goal is to gear up for what we anticipate will be a fabulous Holiday Season."

With record sales of more than a quarter of a million units in just over six weeks, SCEA is anticipating that the PlayStation will be this year's leader among the next-generation video game platforms.

According to Peter Roithmayr, merchandising director at The Electronics Boutique, "The Sony PlayStation continues to be the dominant video game hardware at our stores, by far outselling the Sega Saturn. Every new piece of PlayStation software we get goes straight to the top of our sales charts. We are ecstatic with the sell-through."

Sony Computer Entertainment America, a division of Sony Interactive Entertainment Inc., is based in Foster City, Calif. The company markets the PlayStation for distribution in North America, publishes PlayStation software for the North American market, and manages the U.S. third party licensing program. Sony Interactive Entertainment Inc., a subsidiary of Sony Corporation of America, is headquartered in New York.

Atari Jaguar/Computer Section
Dana Jacobson, Editor

From the Atari Editor's Desk

"Saying it like it is!"

Well, it's been a fairly exciting week for me personally, with regard to the computing side of things Atari. It's All Relative has just released a few new CDs and I managed to get my paws on a couple of them: Electronic Spinster Graphics "PD Clipart Collection" and "All Things Falcon". Both are an excellent collection and I'll be spending even more time with them and giving you a quick review of what I've found. IAR's Greg Kopchak happened to mention online recently that someone is in the process of writing a QuickTime player for Atari users which should generate a number of new CDs. I'd be one of the first in line to grab a few of those! If you've been considering adding a CDRom to your existing Atari set-up, I'd highly recommend it! Below, you'll find a short synopsis of a few of the latest CD offerings from It's All Relative.

Until next time...

All Things Falcon CD - Rev 1.0
A Collection of PD and ShareWare
Software for the Falcon030 computer!

The All Things Falcon CD has been compiled specifically for use with the Atari and C-Lab Falcon 030 Computer Systems. All the files contained on this CD are either Falcon Specific, or are (to the best of our knowledge) 100% Falcon compatible. Every effort to make this CD as hassle free for Falconers as possible, ST programs that kinda work on the Falcon are NOT included. Programs that require "Compatibility Modes" are NOT included. All Things Falcon was released December 1995 by STF Publishing of Independence, Missouri.

Electronic Spinster Graphics

Electronic Spinster Graphics has long been providing quality clip art to the Atari market. Now, for the first time, their graphic collection is available on one CD. Unlike other clip art CD's, this CD is aimed at the Atari market. All images are provided in IMG, CVG, or GEM format for use with Atari or C-Lab Falcon applications. The ESG Collection contains 6,000 IMG files and over 1,000 CVG files covering a broad range of topics. Electronic Spinster Graphics was released in December of 1995 by Electronic Spinster Graphics of Olathe, Kansas.

The Crawly Crypt Archives

Get all of Volume 1 and 2 of the Crawly Crypt series on one CD. All files are compressed and BBS ready. Standard BBS file lists are on the CD for all files. This is a great CD for club librarian, BBS operator or anyone looking for 1.2 gigabytes of Atari files on one CD. The Crawly Crypt Collection was released December 1995 by the Crawly Crypt Corporation of Webb City, Missouri.

We offer All Things Falcon or ESG Graphics at a special price of \$19.99 each.

We offer the Crawly Crypt Collection for the special price of \$39.99.

Get all three of these new CD's for \$79.97 and we will include a free Corel Photo CD with 100 images in Kodak Photo CD format.

Send a check or money order in U.S. funds to:

It's All Relative Software
2233 Keeven lane
Florissant MO 63031 USA
(314) 831-9482

All orders are shipped postpaid, worldwide, add \$3.00 for second day delivery in the US.

Write or call for a copy of our new Winter 1995 newsletter and price list.
CD 12 Pack

Electronic Spinster Graphics by the Electronic Spinster

Includes:

- '• Corel Photo CD Disc featuring 100 Kodak Photo CD images
 - '• Batik Designs MediaClips
 - '• Business Backgrounds MediaClips Full Bloom MediaClips
 - '• Jets MediaClips
 - '• Majestic Places MediaClips Money, Money, Money MediaClips Props
- MediaClips Vintage Aloha MediaClips
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STR Mail Call

"...a place for our readers to be heard"

STReport's MAILBAG

Messages * NOT EDITED * for content

Fm: James Thornhill, Jr. 102172,2761
To: Ralph@STReport 70007,4454

Ralph,
Both yourself and Dana are very welcome. STR or as I like to call it (Simply True Reporting) is one heckuva of a well done product. I bet all of those newsstand magazine publishers just shake their heads when they get a glimpse of STR and wonder how in the world you all do it. :) Please don't just start lurking around the forums Ralph, I depend on you for my unbiased and accurate Atari information and I believe alot of others do as well but just may be afraid to admit it. Please keep bringing us the latest up to date Atari information. I for one really appreciate it.

Jim

Jaguar Section

Defender 2000 Update!! CATnips!
Milestone! Activision News!
And more!

From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

Is it me, or do things seem to be slowing down rather than increasing as we get closer to the holidays? 16 shopping days until Christmas...and counting! Where are all of the games? Television ads? Has anyone seen that infomercial? Whatever happened to the TV schedule that was promised by Atari's Ron Beltramo at the conference on CompuServe, the day before Thanksgiving? Was the infomercial a success, or a bust?

I was actually looking forward to giving our publisher a good poke in the ribs with an "I told you so" comment about this year's holiday season being an exception to "the rule", but it doesn't appear that I'll get the chance. Turn about fair play, I guess; I'll eat those words!

The games are coming, at a trickle. Missile Command 3D has arrived and getting rave reviews. Mine's on the way as well as our review copy. We're also expecting about 5-6 other games shortly; our reviewers are chomping at the bit to get their hands on them for review.

Speaking of reviews, Ruiner Pinball, Pitfall, and Highlander are in various degrees of completion expect them soon. The weeks between the two major holidays is typically hectic for everybody; and it's taking its toll on our reviewers as well, myself included. Stay tuned for those and other reviews in the coming weeks! Defender 2000, according to Jeff Minter, is essentially completed. It should hit the production line soon; maybe hit the streets in late January if all goes well? Let's hope so.

As I mentioned, things are fairly quiet on the Jaguar front at the moment. Here's hoping that the Jaguar sees 3-5 new releases a week up to the holiday. And, perhaps we'll start to see some sort of media blitz these last few weeks (well, I can dream, can't I?).

Until next time...

Jaguar Catalog STR InfoFile - What's currently available, what's coming out.

Current Available Titles

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER
J9000	Cybermorph	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9006	Evolution:Dino Dudes	\$19.99	Atari Corp.
J9005	Raiden	\$29.99	FABTEK,
Inc/Atari Corp.			
J9001	Trevor McFur/ Crescent Galaxy	\$19.99	Atari Corp.
J9010	Tempest 2000	\$39.95	Llamasoft/Atari
Corp.			
J9028	Wolfenstein 3D	\$29.95	id/Atari Corp.
JA100	Brutal Sports FootBall	\$69.95	Telegames
J9008	Alien vs. Predator	\$69.99	Rebellion/Atari
Corp.			
J9029	Doom	\$69.99	id/Atari Corp.
J9036	Dragon: Bruce Lee	\$29.99	Atari Corp.
J9003	Club Drive	\$29.99	Atari Corp.
J9007	Checkered Flag	\$19.99	Atari Corp.
J9012	Kasumi Ninja	\$29.99	
Atari Corp.			
J9042	Zool 2	\$19.99	Atari Corp
J9020	Bubsy	\$19.99	Atari Corp
J9026	Iron Soldier	\$29.99	Atari Corp
J9060	Val D'Isere Skiing	\$39.99	Atari Corp.
	Cannon Fodder	\$49.99	Virgin/C-West
	Syndicate	\$69.99	Ocean
	Troy Aikman Football	\$69.99	Williams
	Theme Park	\$69.99	Ocean
	Sensible Soccer		Telegames
	Double Dragon V	\$59.99	Williams
J9009E	Hover Strike	\$39.99	Atari Corp.
J0144E	Pinball Fantasies	\$59.99	C-West
J9052E	Super Burnout	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9070	White Men Can't Jump	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
	Flashback	\$59.99	U.S. Gold
J9078E	VidGrid (CD)		Atari Corp
J9016E	Blue Lightning (CD)	\$59.99	Atari Corp
J9040	Flip-Out	\$49.99	Atari Corp
J9082	Ultra Vortek	\$69.99	Atari Corp
C3669T	Rayman	\$69.99	Ubi Soft
	Power Drive Rally	\$69.99	TWI
J9101	Pitfall	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9086E	Hover Strike CD	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9031E	Highlander I (CD)	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9061E	Ruiner Pinball	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
	Dragon's Lair	\$69.99	Readysoft
	Missile Command 3D		Atari Corp.

Available Soon

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER
J9069	Myst (CD)	\$59.99	Atari Corp.

	...Mutant Penguins	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9091	Atari Karts	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
	Battlemorph	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
	Breakout 2000	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
	Supercross 3D	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
	Fever Pitch	TBA	Atari Corp.
	I-War	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
	Max Force	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9089	NBA Jam TE	\$69.99	Atari Corp.
J9021	Brett Hull Hockey	\$69.99	Atari Corp.
J9055	Baldies	\$59.99	Atari Corp.

Hardware and Peripherals

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	MANUFACTURER
J8001	Jaguar (no cart)		\$149.99
Atari Corp.			
J8904	Composite Cable	\$19.95	
J8901	Controller/Joyypad	\$24.95	Atari
Corp.			
J8905	S-Video Cable	\$19.95	
	CatBox	\$69.95	ICD
Inc.			
J8800	Jaguar CD-ROM	\$149.99	Atari Corp.
J8908	JagLink Interface	\$29.95	Atari
Corp.			
J8910	Team Tap 4-Player Adapter)	\$29.95	
Atari Corp.			
J8907	Jaguar ProController	\$29.95	Atari
Corp.			
J8911	Memory Track	\$29.95	Atari Corp.
J8909	Tempest 2000: The Soundtrack	\$12.99	
Atari Corp.			

Industry News STR Game Console NewsFile - The Latest Gaming News!

ACTIVISION SIGNS OEM AGREEMENT WITH IBM

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 5 /PRNewswire/ -- Activision, Inc. (Nasdaq: ATVI) announced today that it has granted IBM Corporation (NYSE: IBM) the right to include the Windows(R) 95 versions of Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure and Earthworm Jim with its new line of Aptiva and ThinkPad computers.

"Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure and Earthworm Jim are the perfect vehicles to showcase the advanced multimedia capabilities of IBM's new Aptivas and ThinkPads in combination with Windows 95," stated Bobby Kotick, Chairman and CEO, Activision, Inc. "We are very excited to be associated with IBM in this new venture."

"Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure and Earthworm Jim will be more fun than ever running on IBM's Aptivas and ThinkPads," adds Jose Garcia, general manager, IBM's consumer desktops. "These machines use the latest sound and video technology which, when combined with powerful 32-bit operating systems, makes for great entertainment."

One of the best-selling video game series of all time and one of the first action titles to be released on the Windows 95 operating system, Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure features Harry Jr., son of the original Atari 2600 Pitfall Harry, swinging, pit-hopping, crocodile-dodging, bungee-jumping and boomeranging through 13 levels in a perilous attempt to rescue his father from an evil Mayan warrior. Players face ferocious crocodiles, deadly jaguars, possessed rain forest animals, killer skeletons and wicked warriors as they race through the jungle adventure. Older game fans will enjoy

uncovering a playable version of the entire original Atari 2600 Pitfall! game hidden within one level of the new game.

A humorous action-adventure game, Earthworm Jim is a simple earthworm who suddenly finds himself endowed with super-human qualities when an indestructible cybernetics suit falls out of the sky and lands on him. Defending his right to wear the suit, Jim battles a variety of enemies and undertakes a quest to save princess What's Her Name.

During Christmas 1994, Earthworm Jim became an instant hit on both the Super Nintendo and Sega Genesis video game systems. Earlier this year, it won Sega Product of the Year at the 1995 Consumer Electronics Show, after selling over 500,000 units. The game's popularity has been translated into a new toy line which will be introduced by Playmates Toys, Inc. this Christmas. Additionally, MCA Universal recently launched an animated cartoon series which airs on Saturday mornings.

CONTACT:

Naomi Rosenfeld or Andrea Mabel, 212-850-5600

or,

Miriam Adler, media, 415-296-7383,

all of Morgen-Walke Associates

Activision, Inc. is a publicly held developer and publisher of interactive entertainment software for Microsoft(R) Windows and MS-DOS(R)-compatible, Macintosh and other computers, as well as Nintendo, Sega, 3DO, and Sony PlayStation game systems. Headquartered in Los Angeles with offices in London, Tokyo and Sydney, the company sells and markets products under the Activision and Infocom trade names.

Game Publisher Passes Milestone

Interactive Magic, a privately-held developer and publisher of entertainment software for CD-ROM and online networks, says it has achieved over \$7 million in revenue in its first six months of product sales. The company, based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, publishes the Apache flight simulation game and three other PC CD-ROM titles.

"This year's sales have demonstrated that a small company with great product and great distribution can quickly make an impact in this exciting multimedia market," says Interactive Magic Chairman J.W. Stealey. "My first company, MicroProse, took six years to achieve this level of sales. Two of our first four games have received editor's choice awards and we have shipped more than 240,000 copies of our games to retail outlets around the world. For 1996, we have nine additional titles and expect to achieve our first Internet/commercial online revenues."

BBS to Pay Sega \$600,000 Fine

Sega of America Inc. will be paid \$600,000 by two Californians who distributed the company's video games through a computer bulletin board system. Marqui Labatore of Crockett, California, and Kurtis Buckmaster of Clyde, California, agreed to the settlement with the Redwood City company last week to resolve the two-year-old lawsuit, the Associated Press reports. Documents filed with the U.S. District Court in Oakland allege the pair distributed Sega games to BBS members for a fee or on a barter and trade basis for other games. The Sega games included Jurassic Park, Sonic Spinball and Shining Force. The wire service says Labatore contended in court papers that nobody profited from the service. Buckmaster, a refinery operator with Tosco Corp., said he might be unable to pay. Sega spokeswoman Angela Edwards told the wire service, "We need to tell people we will go after you if you do this sort of thing. It is our property. It is copyrighted and is rightfully ours. It's not a public domain."

Jaguar Online STR InfoFile Online Users Growl & Purr!

Many stores are replenishing supplies of CD-ROM units if they can get them. Atari is still on backorder and fulfilling them as fast as possible. If you were waiting for the CD-ROM... get it now! A new wave of Memory Tracks are shipping also. Memory Track cartridges enable CD game scores and options to be saved for recall at another time.

Here's some updates to software in production. Since the people who schedule these and the people responsible to take them in when they arrived are all eager, the dates are subject to changes. (What's new, right? <g>)

Missile Command 3D (cart) is in stores NOW. Dragon's Lair (CD) is by ReadySoft and also in stores now.

Myst is expected to begin shipping to stores on December 14. NBA Jam-Tournament Edition is expected to begin shipping on December 27. Zoop is expected to begin shipping on January, 5. Attack of the Mutant Penguins is expected to begin shipping on December 29.

Atari Karts is expected to begin shipping on December 22. Supercross 3D is expected to begin shipping on December 20. Fever Pitch Soccer is expected to begin shipping on December 15. I-War is expected to begin shipping on December 15. Other games pending conclusive dates and in production include Baldies and Battlemorph. Note that this list does NOT include third-party releases.

Last Saturday and Sunday were particularly popular days at Toad Computers where they held their "TOAD COMPUTERS HOLIDAY FESTIVAL '95"; billed as "the premier Atari event". Toad Computer has been a leader in customer orientated retailing of Atari products for many years and the Atari Festivals they host have become anticipated annual events for three years now.

In attendance were:

- '• Tom Harker, ICD (BattleSphere, Catbox & Link II)
- '• Hyper Image (Phase Zero)
- '• Rob Perry, System Solutions (ASH, Digital Arts, etc.)
- '• Dan Wilga, Gribnif (Neodesk, Geneva & More!)
- '• Steve Cohen, Wizztronics (Falcon Rack, Cartmaster)
- '• Charles Smeton, Author of STRAIGHT FAX!
- '• Greg Ondo, Steinberg Jones U.S.
- '• Darek Mihocka, Branch Always Software (Gemulator)
- '• Matt Norcross, Floating Fish Studios (Demoing Expos=82, Apex Media)
- '• Kent Kordes, Systems for Tomorrow
- '• Ben Aein, Lapcat Pro Joystick for Jaguar

This was be the first show ever where people got a chance to play BattleSphere over the network with full weapons. The game is nearing completion and supports up to 8 players in an all-out action-packed space adventure! Attendees met developers, won door prizes, saw new products and drank free hot apple cider!

For more information on the event or directions to their store or a copy of their new catalog, contact Toad Computers at (410) 544-6943 or send E-Mail to info@toad.net.

Kim Trampus sent me this from the Internet...

Toad Fest Blast!

This article submitted by David Phillips
(davidp@nais.com) on 12/6/95.

I don't know what an HTML tag is buddy but the Toad Fest was a BLAST!!! The Battlesphere developer was there and talking with everyone! The game is going to be great and he said up to 16 Jags can be Catbox Linked to play with 16 players at once!!! (happy, happy, joy, joy, no joke!:) And a Jaguar games demo tape was played and was AWESOME! The latest and the greatest Atari is offering looked even better than Paystation and Blattern! Atari is doing better now than ever. With Toad Fest still going strong, next years

should be even bigger and better, so ya better go guys and support the Atari.

Jennifer was smiling and everyone was in an excited mood all day and night. More developers should come to the next show if we ask them to be there. The music in Battlesphere is great and the graphics and gameplay are superior! A lot of effort is going into this game. I bought the Catbox (these are the people developing Battlesphere) and null cable and the Lap Cat Pro six button arcade quality joystick and it RULES! No more tired thumbs!:) Thank you.

Anyway, everything Atari was there and then some with people coming from a thousand miles and more. We all played Battlesphere all day and night till the end and everyone tried it. Other monitors were displayed under wall poster of future releases coming soon. CD's and Cart games were played at request. Everyone had a good time, hope to see you all there next year.:)

-- David.:)

Here's a Prodigy comment... (keep in mind those gamers on Prodigy are demanding! <g>)

Board: VIDEO GAMES BB
Topic: ATARI JAGUAR
Subject: BOUGHT JAG AGAIN
To: ALL

ALL,
I RECENTLY POSTED A NOTE SAYING THAT I TRADED MY JAG FOR A SATURN. BOY, WAS I WRONG TO DO THAT JAG IS MUCH BETTER THAN ANY A SATURN. SO THE DAY AFTER I GOT MY SATURN I WENT OUT AND GOT ANOTHER JAG. I CAN'T WAIT FOR JAG CD. IT SHOULD BE A REAL WINNER.

...another Prodigy observation...

To: atari@genie.geis.com
Date: 11/29/95
ID: 3085624
From: XGVJ70B@mail.prodigy.com
Subject: Thank you

I went out yesterday (11-28-95) and bought a Jaguar and I'm very happy with the graphics to me Its better then Sony's Playstation. So far I have Cybermorph and Iron Soldier, but I'm planning to get more. I think Atari is a great company. Both games are 3d and that's why I love my new Atari Jaguar. Thank you, Don Thomas and all the Atari staff.

P.S. I got my Jaguar from Radio Shack for \$200.00 it came with 2 games 2 controller's and monitor cables.

Bye please keep in touch with game and hardware prices put me on your mailing list

My spy on the Internet, Frans Keylard, sends me...

In rec.games.video.atari, neuralog@Starbase.NeoSoft.COM (Neuralog) wrote:

Hi,
Boy, the Jag sure has increased it's exposure as far as I'm concerned! Just this weekend I saw Rhonda playing T2k on USA Up All Night. (That was Friday) Saturday, I went and rented Pitfall and FlipOut from a new MicroPlay where the clerk was really pro Jag! (And there was a sign on the wall by the Jag games talking about a Jag enthusiasts group/BBS) Then on Sunday, I take my family to Wal*Mart to get an air filter (am I fun or what?) and to my

surprise they have a Jaguar section with a stack of Jaguars! Moral of story? Nay sayers shut up!

BTW, Pitfall showed me a great gaming time from the word go! I liked it much more than Rayman because of the faster action. FlipOut didn't show me much, however I wasn't in the mood to have to think too hard. It's nice to be able to rent a Jag game for \$2 to try it out. Now I know to spend \$\$ on Pitfall and not FlipOut.

Your Mileage May Vary,
--Ken Land

Great new place to check out Atari news...

Join Extreme on the World Wide Web!
[HTTP://OURWORLD.COMPUSEVE.COM/HOMEPAGES/_EXTREME](http://OURWORLD.COMPUSEVE.COM/HOMEPAGES/_EXTREME)

Frans is still finding raves on ubi Soft's Rayman!
Date: Tue, 5 Dec 1995 09:28:49
From: ST923277@PIP.CC.BRANDEIS.EDU To: Multiple recipients of list
<jaguar@bucknell.edu>
Subject: Discussion of the Atari Jaguar and video gaming industry

Hi folks! Sorry about the posts to this list that were meant for the server. I sure feel stupid (cuz I used to laugh at the people sending their unsubscribe requests to the list), but I guess I've been uncloaked from lurk status.

OOTR: I had the chance to play Rayman on all three next-gen platforms, and IMH(and unbiased)O, the Jag version is by far the most fun. It is somewhat lacking in the unnecessary graphics effects department, like intros spooled from CDs, wipes between levels and sparkles and animated electoons. And while the soundtrack certainly isn't as hi-fi as a CD can be, it doesn't suck like some rags would have you believe. The Jag version is also missing the cheesy voices that really ruin the fantasy setting.

The level designs are also different. The side scrolling mosquito level is no longer speedy shooter. You can only punch with your fist (no 'skito snout shooting) and you can imagine how poky that is on an auto scrolling level. No one who has played the Jag version of the level would prefer the slower paced one.

Most important, though, is the control and playability. The Jag version is much tighter and more responsive, and the characters don't move as if they existed on a plane separate from the graphics. Maneuvers feel more like chores on the other platforms, at least until you get used to it. Control is such an intangible that I am afraid most people would not put much stock in these observations, which is a shame, unless they have had the benefit of trying all three.

Bottom line: If play is the thing, Jag is best. If you're very concerned with audio/visual presentation, the CD versions go one better than the Jag's already excellent sights and sounds. Though I haven't finished any of these I expect a fancier ending in the CD versions, which may be important to some people. Oh, and the cart is also more expensive (but no load time!), only Jag has breakout bonus game, and I've yet to find any cheats for the Saturn version.

Whew! How is that for a debut post? Thanks for listening.

Check out the Wave Magazine section of an on-line publication group.
Browsers can click on the Atari logo and go to the latest reviews of Atari
products.

The address is tipub.com/TIP/ if you want to check it out.

Happy Holidays!

--Don Thomas

From CompuServe's Atari Jaguar Forum, by way of the Usenet, comes the latest
status of Defender 2000:

Sb: Re: Message from YaK!
Fm: Keita Iida 75271,122
To: All

To all,
I would just like to share with you guys a message posted by Yak himself on
the Internet. I don't know how to paste outside documents, so I will
tediously retype his message. It's worth it, though. Here goes ----

In article <4a2dc1\$376@ixnews8.ix.netcom.com>, llamaman@ix.netcom.com(YaK)
writes:

"Okay, here it is, the post I have been longing to write for weeks:

D2K is code-complete this afternoon and released to manufacture...

Anointed of God: Williams had to scrutinize it before release, and the
scrutineer was none other than the Very Holy Eugene Jarvis Himself, Original
Creator. YaK bows his horns humbly before his Deity and thanks Him for
looking favourably upon his code. Now, I am bugging off to Hawaii for a
week to recover from this whole period of my life...after I go out for a
celebratory curry with my test crew and producer tomorrow night."

ICD's Jaguar CATBOX STR Review A Necessity or, an expendable add-on toy?

CATBOX

NOTICE, 12/08/95:

This review is re-posted for benefit of those who missed it the first
time it appeared in STReport's Issue # 1143. Correspondingly, it's
presented once again to affirm STReport's support for the fine
accomplishment our staff member and reviewer Dominick J. Fontana achieved in
reviewing this ICD product. When this review first appeared in issue 1143,
ICD's Tom Harker raised such a pugnacious fuss along with a few of his
fellow Jaguar developers and a user or two, that it was decided to re-review

the Catbox. In all fairness to both Dominick J. Fontana and ICD's Tom Harker, we asked that the very same Catbox reviewed by Dominick be sent to me for a re-review.

Truthfully speaking, after having set-up and tested the Catbox, using my humble setup along with a pair of Telex earphones and a pair of Koss Denims with an adapter, no fault was found with Dominick's review. In fact, I felt his review was quite favorable toward the Catbox and at the same time, extremely truthful for our readers. Thus, this re-print of his excellent review. The Catbox will be shipped back to ICD the first of the week.

In all probabilities, this effort may not have been undertaken at all had it not been for a series of hateful E-Mails having been sent to both myself and Mr. Fontana. Uttered by none other than Tom Harker himself!! Harker's use of vulgar language in making wild and irresponsible accusations of my not being capable of writing and of Dominick's incompetence as a reviewer was the final straw! I must admit, this unusual and thoughtless behavior, by a corporate executive and officer of an Atari Jaguar developer group, is a pitiful disgrace. We, at STReport, are ashamed for and of Tom Harker. We've never been witness to such unprofessional and equally capricious behavior. Except of course, the scandalously contrived tirades we endured at the hands of the leaders of a previous "professional" Atari developer group. (must be a sick tradition).

Mr. Fontana's credentials far exceed those of most reviewers. Aside from the number of technical articles written for the MIDI/Music forum on CompuServe, he is an accomplished reviewer for a number of well established Professional Musician's Publications such as Quarter Notes, a music software newsletter, and now, for MIX Magazine, the Bible of the Sound Industry. Additionally, Mr. Fontana, a fully accredited member of the New York Bar, is a highly successful Corporate Attorney with enviable credentials. Mr. Fontana is also contemplating the creation of a legal column for Mix magazine in the near future.

In closing I present forthwith, Dominick J. Fontana's excellent and highly informative review.

Available Now

by: Dominick J. Fontana
(CompuServe: 74766,2154 or CIS:Fontana)
(Internet: Fontana@CIS.CompuServe.com)

Date of Review: October 26, 1995

BASIC INFORMATION:

Hardware	: Expansion device for Atari Jaguar
Manufactured by	: ICD, Incorporated, Rockford, IL.
List Price	: \$69.95

OPENING COMMENTS:

The CatBox (CB) is a hardware expansion device for the Atari Jaguar. It is claimed to add nine features to the Jaguar: three audio, three video, and three communications. The unit is housed in an attractive heavy duty silver-colored metal case and plugs into the DSP and AV ports on the back of the Jaguar. You then connect the audio, video, and communications cables to the back of the CB. No separate power supply is required for the CB, since it draws its power from the Jaguar. The unit has "CatBox" in red lettering and a picture of a black cat. Two red LEDs are used as eyes for the cat and they light up steadily when the Jaguar has power applied to it and they flash when communications data is being received. There are also two internal jumpers that can be used to enable or disable two of the CatBox's

functions. The CB comes with a temporary owner's manual, which consists of three photocopied, typewritten pages, with printing on both sides of each page, for a total of six pages, and a Warranty Registration Card. However, the type, conditions, and length of the warranty are never mentioned. The temporary manual states that the final manual will be mailed to purchasers in May or June 1995, but to date, the final manual has not been completed and mailed out. A copy of the temporary manual can be downloaded, at the user's expense, from CompuServe and GENie.

WHAT IT HAS:

The CatBox has the following connectors and controls on its panel, which are grouped here according to the nine functions that the CB provides:

Audio:

- 1) Two line level RCA (phono) jacks for left/mono and right stereo audio.
- 2) RGB Monitor Audio, which is carried on Pin 9 of the Analog RGB connector (to be discussed shortly). This is a mono audio signal.
- 3) Two stereo 1/8 inch (mini-phone) headphone jacks and volume control knob.

Video:

- 1) Composite Video RCA (phono) jack for composite video output.
- 2) S-Video 4 pin round mini DIN jack for S-Video output.
- 3) Analog RGB female DB9 jack for Analog RGB video and mono audio output.

Communications:

- 1) Two 6P4C RJ11 telephone type jacks for CatNet (network) communications. A three position communications toggle switch lets you select which of the three communications ports you want to use. An RJ11 telephone connector terminator plug is also included.
- 2) DB9 male RS232 port for serial communications between two Jaguars or between one Jaguar and a standard modem.
- 3) DSP pass through port for future expansion.

WHAT IT DOES:

The CatBox is designed to allow you to connect various audio, video, and communications devices to the Atari Jaguar. The Audio section is pretty straightforward. You can use standard RCA (phono) cables to connect the Jaguar, via the CatBox, to any line level audio inputs, such as on your TV, monitor, or stereo receiver/amplifier. There are left and right stereo outputs, or you can use a mono output by just connecting a cable to one output. However, the "manual" is unclear as to which output is the mono output. In the "Line level audio" section it states that "the white colored jack passes either left or mono audio." But in the "RGB monitor audio" section it states that the RGB monitor mono audio signal "is automatically disconnected when an RCA cable is plugged into the right/mono (red) audio jack." It's no big deal, but the manual should be corrected to avoid confusion. The bottom line is that you can get either stereo audio or mono audio from the CatBox's line level outputs.

The two mini-headphone jacks allow you to connect two sets of headphones and regulate the volume with the volume control knob. Whenever a headphone is plugged in, all other audio outputs are muted. The third audio output is meant for use with Atari SC1224 or SC1435 monitors, or any other monitor that receives mono audio through its monitor signal cable. That is, in certain instances, you can connect a monitor to the CatBox Analog RGB connector and have the monitor both display RGB video and play mono audio. However, you can still opt to use the line level stereo output jacks for the audio with these monitors, instead of the mono audio that passes through the Analog RGB connector.

The mono signal is automatically muted whenever you hook up cables to

the stereo audio outputs or to the headphone jacks. The mono audio output can also be muted by removing jumper J1 (to be discussed shortly).

The Jaguar console just provides basic RF output, which connects to a TV's antenna input, to provide picture and sound to your TV. You can also get Composite Video and S-Video outputs from the Jaguar by purchasing special cables from Atari. These cables connect to the Jaguar by the means of a special connector on one end, that plugs into the Jaguar's AV port. While Atari doesn't directly sell Analog RGB cables, they can be purchased from Redmond Cable in Washington, but they are quite expensive.

The CatBox provides three types of video outputs: Composite Video, S-Video, and Analog RGB. These three outputs and the standard Jaguar RF output may all be used at the same time or in any combination to connect multiple video displays. The quality of the video outputs, from best to worst is: Analog RGB; S-Video; Composite Video; standard Jaguar RF.

The Composite Video and S-Video outputs can be used with any video displays that have Composite or S-Video inputs. With the CatBox you can just use a standard, and cheaper, Composite or S-Video cable, instead of the more expensive specialty cables that Atari sells. Note that with these video outputs, you still need to connect the line level audio outputs to your display device or to a receiver/amplifier, so you'll also need a pair of RCA stereo cables for the audio.

I would have preferred that the Composite Video output was physically located next to the line level audio outputs, since they all use RCA cables. Normally a composite cable has three RCA cables that are attached to each other, so it would have been nice to connect them to the CatBox all in a row. But the CatBox has the line level audio outputs located next to the S-Video jack, followed by the RGB jack, and finally the Composite Video jack.

The Analog RGB output can only be used with monitors with a Horizontal Sync rate of 15.75 kHz. These kinds of monitors are not too common today. The Atari ST and Amiga color monitors both supported this H-Sync rate. In addition, even if you have a compatible monitor, you might also need a special monitor cable adapter, so that you can plug the monitor cable into the Analog RGB output on the CatBox. You can purchase these adapters directly from ICD or have them make a custom adapter for you. You can also make your own cable adapter, and the manual provides the pin connections you'll need to know.

There is also an internal jumper in the CatBox labeled J7, which allows you to select Vertical Sync or Composite Sync. If the vertical screen on your monitor is rolling, then set this jumper to the other position. You can also disable the mono audio signal which normally comes through the Analog RGB connector by removing the internal audio jumper J1. To change either of the jumpers inside the CatBox, you have to disassemble it. The manual tells you how to do this, but dip switches would have been better. The manual also provides a list of some of the Analog RGB monitors you can use with the CatBox, along with the adapter you'll need and the suggested jumper settings. Twelve monitors are listed and nine of them require special adapters.

On the communications side, the CatBox provides DSP pass through, CatNet, and RS232 communications. The DSP pass through will allow you to connect future devices to the Jaguar's DSP port, while the CatBox is connected to the Jaguar. You use a three-position toggle switch to determine which port you wish to use.

For some time now, Atari has been touting the JagLink capabilities of the Jaguar. This will allow you to connect two Jaguars together for multi-player games. However, the game must have JagLink capability built in. I believe that, to date, only "Doom" has this capability, but at the time of "Doom's" release, Atari still had not released the JagLink cable. However, within the past few weeks Atari has finally released the JagLink cable. However, this is an expensive cable, since the cable has the equivalent of an RS232 port built into it.

There has also been talk for some time about using the Jaguar with a voice-modem. However, this still has not materialized. The communications ports on the CatBox are meant to be used to perform similar network and modem capabilities. CatNet was developed for ICD by Black Cat Design to provide network capabilities similar to JagLink. The RS232 port is to allow multi-player games between two Jaguars or over a standard modem, but without voice. So you can play games with your friends over the modem, but you can't talk to them while you are doing so. However, just as with the Atari protocols, you cannot use CatNet or the RS232 port, unless the game is specifically designed to allow it.

As of this writing, only "Doom" has a two player head to head mode that supports the CatBox RS232 port using a null modem cable. This cable is cheaper than Atari's special JagLink cable. "Aircars" was also supposed to support the RS232 port as well as CatNet, but the future of that product is now in limbo.

What all this means is that you can connect two Jaguars together for a multi-player game by connecting a simple IBM AT type null modem cable between the CatBox RS232 ports on each Jaguar. Again, this will only work if the game supports it, and each person must have a Jaguar, a CatBox, and a copy of the game, plus you'll need a null modem cable. You can also use an IBM AT type modem cable to connect the CatBox to a standard modem. As of this writing, I don't believe there are any Jaguar games that support reliable modem play.

CatNet is a network standard that allows up to 32 Jaguars to play in a local network type environment. CatNet uses the 6P4C RJ11 telephone type connectors on the CatBox. However, these are not for connection to a modem. Again, I don't believe any games support this feature at this time. It is also meant as a replacement for JagLink. The manual also contains a list of the cables and adapters, with their prices, which are available from ICD.

OPINION:

I wasn't able to test all of the functions of the CatBox. Actually, I was only able to test two of the audio functions, one of the video functions, and none of the communications functions. I have heard of others who have used the remaining audio/video functions successfully, but I cannot verify that information. Also, I cannot offer an opinion on how any of the communications functions operate.

Audio:

I used the stereo line level outputs connected to an RCA Dimensia TV and the TV was connected to a Pioneer stereo receiver and a pair of Technics speakers, and it sounded fine. However, it didn't sound any better than using Atari's Composite Audio-Video cable connected the same way. My biggest disappointment was with the headphone jacks. The output level was extremely low in volume. I used five different sets of headphones with the CatBox and they all produced the same results. The following are the headphones I used:

- '• Sennheiser HD400: Excellent on-the-ear large phones.
- '• Sennheiser HD250 Linear: A \$299 top-of-the-line closed-back set of phones.
- '• Sony MDR-07: Excellent on-the ear small phones.
- '• Realistic Nova '30: An old set of closed circumnaural phones.
- '• Aiwa: A small set of on-the-ear phones that came with Aiwa's top-of-the-line "Walkman."

With all of the above phones, the volume level coming from the headphone jacks on the CB was extremely low. Sometimes, it was barely audible with the open phones, since they let in ambient sound. Also, the headphone jacks were placed too closely to the volume control. With the headphone plug inserted, it was very difficult to turn the volume knob. Also, the volume knob does not have a 0 position. That is, you can lower the volume, but you can't turn the sound off completely. However, the quality

of the sound through the headphones was very good. Listening to stereo music and effects through the phones provides a different experience than listening through speakers. It brings you into the action more and is quite exciting. It also allows you to play in silence, so as not to disturb others. Unfortunately, I cannot recommend using the headphone jacks on the CB, since the volume was too low. I've used headphones before by connecting them to my stereo receiver and the results could sometimes be breathtaking. Not so with the CB because of the low volume level. The inclusion of headphone jacks on the CB was a good idea that was not implemented properly. I was not able to test the RGB monitor audio.

Video:

I used the Composite Video output connected to a 27" color RCA Dimensia TV/Monitor. It produced a nice sharp picture with vivid colors. However, it didn't look any better than using Atari's Composite Audio-Video cable connected to the same TV/Monitor. I was not able to test the S-Video or Analog RGB outputs.

Communications:

I was not able to test the RS232 and CatNet ports or the DSP pass through. When I finished testing the CatBox I asked myself who would benefit from owning such a device. It is claimed to provide nine different functions. But as a practical matter, it does not provide nine functions for the average user. It may provide the choice of using nine different functions, but most people will not use all nine. You'll basically use the best video display you can with it and forget about the other video options. Let's break down the nine functions by groups:

'• Audio:

If you want to connect a monitor that will accept mono audio, then you will use the RGB monitor audio; otherwise you will not use it. So for most people, the CatBox provides stereo line level outputs and two headphone outputs. But you can also get the line level outputs with Atari's Composite Video and S-Video cables. And if you hook up those outputs to a stereo receiver, you can plug a set of headphones into the receiver or two sets with a Y adapter. Still, the inclusion of two headphone jacks with volume control on the CatBox was a nice touch. Many people don't connect the line level outputs to a receiver and therefore can't use headphones with the Jaguar. And a receiver only provides one headphone jack, unless you use a Y adapter, which is not suitable for two-player games. Plus, having the headphone jacks on the back of the Jaguar makes it easier to connect headphones and control their volume.

So being able to plug two sets of headphones into the back of the Jaguar, via the CatBox, and control their volume is a good idea. Unfortunately, the low volume level of the headphone jacks is a drawback. Given the choice between using the headphone jack on a stereo receiver or on the CB, I would chose the receiver. But if you don't have that choice, then you might be happy with using the headphone jacks on the CB.

'• Video:

Everyone can use the RF output on the Jaguar as standard. And you can also use Composite Video or S-Video outputs, if you buy one of Atari's cables. You can also connect the Jaguar to an RGB monitor, if you buy a specialty cable from Redmond Cable. As such, the CatBox does not really provide any new video options. So if you already have a Composite Video or S-Video cable from Atari (which both include line level stereo audio outputs), then from an audio/video standpoint, all you gain with the CB is the two headphone jacks and volume control.

I think one of the better uses of the CatBox is if you want to connect the Jaguar to an Analog RGB monitor or if you want to have more than one video display connected to the Jaguar at the same time. As I previously mentioned, you can connect an RGB monitor to the Jaguar with a special cable from Redmond Cable, but that cable is quite expensive. Plus with all the different types of monitors, you have to be sure that you get the proper

cable from Redmond. But it appears quite easy to connect a monitor to the CatBox with just the purchase of the proper adapter from ICD (if your monitor needs an adapter), and they are quite knowledgeable about which adapter you'll need. Plus, you'll get RGB mono audio, for those monitors that support it.

'• Communications:

The DSP pass through isn't really a function, so that leaves the CatNet and RS232 ports. So what do you do with the CatNet and RS232 ports? Well, right now, not much, but that is because there's really no software support for these features in the Jaguar games. And even if future games do contain such support, you have to ask yourself if these are features that you will use.

For networked games, you need at least 2 Jaguars, 2 CatBoxes, 2 copies of the same game, and another person to network with. However, you have that capability right now with the recently released JagLink cable. With the CatBox, you can either connect two Jaguars by their RS232 ports with a null modem cable (cheaper than the JagLink) or connect up to 32 Jaguars with CatNet, using inexpensive telephone cables.

Modem play is still not available on the Jaguar, since Atari has yet to release its voice-modem. Modem play is accomplished on the CatBox by using a standard modem cable with a standard modem. However, you will not have voice capability, so you can't talk to your opponent while you play. But modem play is virtually a moot point, until there is enough software that supports it. If that software appears, and especially if you already own a data modem, then you're ready to go if you have the CatBox, since all you need is a simple modem cable. That alone could justify the cost of the CatBox, although you won't have voice capability. The price of Atari's voice-modem, with headset/microphone, if it's ever released, will most likely cost more than the CatBox.

So the CatBox is a very cost effective solution for Jaguar communications, but unfortunately there is virtually no software support for it. Now that the JagLink has been released, we may see more networkable software. But it's unknown whether we'll see modem support in future software if Atari doesn't release its voice-modem.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

It would have been nice if all the ports on the CatBox had been incorporated into the back of the Jaguar as standard, but they weren't. So if you just purchased the Jaguar and only have the RF output, then purchasing the CatBox might be a good investment. You'll be able to utilize better audio and video outputs, you'll be able to use two sets of headphones, and you'll have communications options for networking and modem play for the future. And you'll have all this at a potentially much cheaper cost than if you purchased Atari's products (special audio/video cable(s), JagLink, and voice-modem, if it becomes available). And the CatBox is even a better value if you want to connect the Jaguar to an Analog RGB monitor (with mono audio), since Atari doesn't directly support monitors, requiring you to buy an expensive custom made cable from Redmond Cable.

On the other hand, if you have already purchased a special A/V cable, then right now the CatBox really doesn't offer you much. For instance, many people have home theatre systems or have their TV connected to their stereo system. Let's assume that you already bought the Composite Video cable from Atari and you have the Jaguar connected to the composite audio/video jacks on your TV. The Jaguar's graphics are sharp and colorful and its stereo audio is playing through your stereo system. You can use two sets of headphones by plugging them into your stereo receiver and using a Y adapter and you can control the volume from your receiver.

If you purchase the CatBox, you'll retire your Composite Video cable from use and simply use the line level audio outputs and the Composite Video output of the CatBox to make the same connections that you already had.

There will be no improvement in audio or video quality. And instead of using a Y-adaptor and two sets of headphones with your stereo receiver, you can use the two headphone jacks on the CatBox, but the volume will be much lower. You probably won't need or use the S-Video or Analog RGB outputs or RGB monitor audio. The DSP pass through isn't really a function, though it's comforting to know it is available for future expansion. And the CatNet and RS232 ports are of limited utility right now, for networking and modem play, because of the lack of software.

So in this scenario, you literally don't add any functionality to the Jaguar by purchasing the CatBox, and the headphone output won't be as good. And you'll still have to purchase a standard composite audio/video cable and possibly 1/4" to 1/8" adapters for your headphones. Of course, you could then sell your Atari Composite Video cable in order to recoup part of your investment in the CatBox. I don't own the Jaguar CDRom unit, but I was assured by ICD that the CatBox and the CDRom unit can both be connected to the Jaguar without any problems, except that the CDRom unit will probably make it difficult to see when the LEDs light up in the cat's eyes on the CatBox.

The final point I would like to make is that the connection between the CatBox and the Jaguar is very loose and tentative. Connecting the CatBox is simple, but it is not a set-and-forget proposition. Although the manual cautions you to disconnect the CatBox when you move the Jaguar, I originally thought that would only apply if you were transporting the Jaguar outside of your house. I was wrong. Its impossible to move the Jaguar and Catbox leaving them connected.

So if you keep the Jaguar near your TV and then want to carry it to your sofa or coffee table to play, you have to disconnect the CatBox, carry the CatBox and the Jaguar to your playing position, and then connect the CatBox to the Jaguar again. Then, you have to do the same thing when you return the Jaguar to its place near the TV. It's a real nuisance. Plus, the CatBox can sometimes come loose if you move the Jaguar while playing. Between the flimsy CatBox connection in the back and the infamous flimsy joystick connections in the front, it makes the Jaguar console feel like a toy rather than a piece of high tech gear. Fortunately, it's very simple to connect the CatBox to the Jaguar. It simply plugs into the A/V ports on the back of the Jaguar. Also, remember to buy long enough cables for use with the CatBox.

RATINGS (based on 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest):

Functionality:	8.5
Usefulness:	8 or 3 (see Comments)*
Sturdiness:	9.5
Ergonomics:	6
Manual:	7
Reviewer's Overall Rating:	7

QUICK RATINGS COMMENTS:

- ' • Functionality: The CatBox basically works as advertised, but the headphone output volume was way too low, even with the volume turned all the way up.
- ' • Usefulness: *8 If you haven't already purchased any special cables for the Jaguar and you want to hook it up to an Analog RGB monitor, or S-Video or Composite Video inputs and/or stereo audio inputs, then the CatBox is a good way to start. You can accomplish your audio/video hookup and have some communications options for the future. If you already have the audio/video hookup that you want, then it's probably better to wait to see if future Jaguar software supports the CatBox's communications options before you purchase it.
- ' • Sturdiness: Extremely well made and robust. It's built like a tank.
- ' • Ergonomics: I didn't like the flimsy connection between the CatBox and

the Jaguar and I didn't like that the volume control was placed so close to the headphone jacks. I also wish that the Composite Video output was placed right next to the stereo line level audio outputs. And although the CatBox is an attractive piece of hardware, it doesn't match the Jaguar console and actually looks a bit funny when connected to it.

- Manual: The manual was reasonably well-written and I only found one typo, but the way it was presented was poor. Using three photocopied typewritten pages is something I would expect from a computer shareware product and not from a Jaguar hardware product.

Reviewer's Overall Rating:

The CatBox is a good product, but with a limited audience. If it had been released sooner, that is, shortly after the Jaguar's release, then maybe it would have seemed like a more viable product. But now that the Jaguar hasn't sold well and most of its early adoptees have already purchased special cables for their audio/video setups, it makes the CatBox look like it is offering too little, too late.

SUMMARY:

Is the CatBox a good product and does it do what it claims? Yes, the CatBox does what it's supposed to do, except that I thought the headphone outputs were too low in volume level. But it doesn't really offer anything new, since you can accomplish what the CatBox does with other products. But it does give you many audio, video, and communications options in one compact, convenient, and sturdy product, and at a cost that is less expensive than if you purchased separate products to do the same thing. Whether or not you have a need for a product such as the CatBox depends greatly on what special cables you have already purchased and on the communications support in future Jaguar software.

The bottom line is; "if you've just purchased the Jaguar, you might wish to consider the CatBox instead of a special Audio/Video cable and hope that more software supports the CatBox's communications options in the future." But if you already have the audio/video setup that you want with the Jaguar, then it's probably better to wait until there is some software that takes advantage of the CatBox's communications options before purchasing the CatBox.

ONLINE WEEKLY STReport OnLine

The wires are a hummin'!

PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

On CompuServe

compiled by
Joe Mirando
73637,2262

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. HMI update.... CIM is the pits! I've been "breaking in" a 90 MHz Pentium with Windows '95 for my boss and, with all the talk the past couple of weeks about CIS eventually (please remember the "eventually" part) dropping ASCII support, I thought it'd be interesting

to put in so more time on CompuServe's CIM.

I had always attributed the vexing lack of speed that CIM (CompuServe Information Manager) displayed was due to the fact that I had "test flown it" on an old, slow, '386...

Not so folks. That slowdown is still evident on the Pentium. It has to do with the fact that under HMI (Host/Micro Interface, CompuServe's protocol of choice), your computer does a lot of the work that their computer does in "ASCII mode" (including Vidtex). While a CIM-running computer gets the host computer's command to draw a box with a slider, acknowledges the command, complies with the command, tells the host computer that it has complied, asks for the text options to put into the box, puts the text options into the box, tells the host that it has put the text into the box, etc., etc., in ASCII mode you can tell the host to go directly to your favorite forum, read the description of the latest files, and be half way through downloading it.

Eventually you won't even notice the extra communication because modems (both phone and cable) will get faster and faster, but for right now, I'll keep my venerable terminal program, thank you very much.

Now don't get the idea that I'm down on CompuServe... I'm not. CIS is still my favorite service. This is the direction the industry is taking. Using this type of protocol reduces the work the host computer has to do, and that enables them to do what they do for a lower price. But I still wish it weren't so.

Well, let's get on with the reason for this column... All the great news, hints, tips, and info available every week right here on CompuServe.

From the Atari Computing Forums

On the subject of PGP encryption, I post:

"PGP (Pretty Good Privacy) version 2.62b is now available for Atari 680x0 computers in the NCSA Forum here on CompuServe. (I know cuz I uploaded it)

PGP is a Public Key encryption system that allows for encryption, decryption, and digital "signing" of files to ensure that the data or text cannot be read by "unauthorized" eyes. "Signing" insures that the file came from where it says it came from.

Since Big Brother, in the form of the U.S. government, cannot "break" the encryption, it has decided, in all its wisdom, to classify this program in the same category as ammunition and explosives! Big B would much prefer that we use "Clipper", the brainchild of the National Security Agency which it holds a master key to. This way, Big B can decide that you must be hiding something and get the key out of legal escrow and "crack" your data. Can you say J. Edgar Hoover?? I knew that you could.

Because of the classification, this program may not be exported outside of the U.S. or Canada.

For this reason, PGP for the Atari ST is available in the NCSA forum instead of the Atari Computing Forum. To get this file, you must first JOIN the NCSA forum (GO NCSAFORUM, then JOIN), and request via e-mail that you be given access to Library 12, which is where the programs of this nature are located.

There is also a shell program located in the archive to make PGP easier to use."

Mark Kelling tells me:

"Gee, they want to make getting a copy of PGP almost as difficult as getting the plans to an atomic bomb!"

I reply to Mark:

"That's just about the idea. I can understand their point, but the fact is (to steal a line from the NRA), If PGP is outlawed, only outlaws will have PGP.

It's too bad that the government has taken this stance, because PGP is really a cool program. It isn't as intuitive as I'd hoped, but then again, it's basically free, so for the price it's golden.

I think that every computer user should have a copy... just in case!"

Carl Barron adds:

"You can always import it via the internet. Does Canada have this dumb export law too? If not it shows the stupidity of the politics in DC. Strange indeed."

I post to Carl:

"...I wonder if it would be worthwhile to start either a message base or a library somewhere with public keys from people in the Atari community. I've collected lots of keys just to see if I've got the process down right, but none of them are people I have any reason to send e-mail or files to.

"The only way they'll get my PGP is to pry it from my cold, dead,... Hard drive!" <grin>

Carl replies:

"It will probably be worth while to start/find a library of PGP public keys, as this place and possibly 'the larger atari place' will go with proprietary software shortly. The only computer friendly place will be BBS's and possibly the internet, if you have a souped up atari. WWW does not look to promising [but is possible] on a 8mhz m68000. PGP is a must for private communication on the internet. Without it there is no privacy."

I ask Sysop Ron Luks:

"...BTW, what do you think about opening up a library for PGP public keys?

I know that storage space is tight, but the keys don't take up too much room."

Ron replies:

"Naw. I don't want to get messed up in the PGP privacy mess for anything. We'll pass. Thanks anyways."

Well, to each his own, I guess. Meanwhile, John Francis asks for HMI information:

"I'm updating a file of information about CIS offline readers. Can you tell me whether an HMI-compatible version of QuickCIS has been released or is planned, and if the latter, approximately when it will be released?"

Sysop Keith Joins tells John:

"No HMI version of QuickCIS was released and there won't be any HMI program for the Atari line as things now stand."

James Wright asks about accessing the Internet through CompuServe with an ST:

"There is a World-Wide-Web Browser Package for the Atari ST family of computers at ftp://ftp.toad.net/pub/atarist/internet/www_latest.zip. This package is free.

My question is, How can I access the internet through CompuServe with my Atari to get this browser? I asked the SYSOP in the internet new users forum and he didn't know the answer."

Sysop Bob Retelle, a very knowledgeable guy, tells James:

"That's what is known as a "Catch 22" situation..."

You can do ftp file transfers from CompuServe, but only if you're running a system that supports the CIM software (PC and Mac). You could get it from the WWW but only if you already have a browser.

Another way would be to have the file sent to you in e-mail by a mail server (which unfortunately I doubt Toad can do).

I'm going to make a note to try to download the file and upload it here in our software libraries if it's different from what we have already... to help ease the "Catch 22"..."

Carl Barron adds:

"The latest www is www108.zip, possibly www109.zip. It does not support PPP and will be useless for CIS. NOS will work for ftp [last I knew] if you also dl and change the phone #/password data of another file in these libs. NOS is a tos program and not very user friendly but it worked, the last time I had consistant modems from CIS.

I have www108.zip some place. If its not here, when I find it I will upload it. tcp/icp protocol, web browser, and something else included requires SLIP, not CSLIP or PPP. At the current state www*.zip will be useless on CIS itself.

Computer Direct is supposedly importing some commercial web/internet stuff, don't have details yet."

Denis Postle tells Carl:

"I understand from Denesh Dhbuta who looks after support for the www package that a substantial new version is imminent. the tcp end of already works fine with a slip connection but the browser leaves a lot to be desired. Like any gifs that don't have 256 colours crash it.

The new browser will even handle forms. Any day now I gather. I'll post a message when I receive my copy."

Geoff Cryer posts:

"I guess this is heresy on this forum, but...

My son would like to run his ageing ST games etc on his PC (DX4/100). Is there a suitable emulator around? Preferably (v) low cost!!"

Sysop Jim Ness tells Geoff:

"There is a product called GEMULATOR, which is a hardware card you install in your PC. It includes a set of Atari ST rom chips, which contain the Atari operating system, and also includes the software necessary to emulate an Atari computer.

Some other members here own GEMULATORS, and may be able to tell you more about them."

Simon Churchill adds:

"As mentioned Gemulator could be used but this is mainly for application software and not Games. Due to some code within ST games the PC is incapable of handling all instances and will crash. To PLAY ST Games have an ST, to use ST Application's consider the Gemulator.

(It's the direct screen access and sound/music in games that cause the main problem's.)"

Mary Hall sends up an SOS:

"Help!!!!!! I'm having a Bxxch of a time with Gemul8r. Toad has helped as much as you could but BraSoft has not at all. Might as well shout down a well for the help I got there.....

my problems.....

at home ... 486SX clone w/Win 95, TOS 2.06, QEMUL8R4. Boot up seems fine til I get the Atari screen. All the drives are there but mouse is dead. I can use the 2.06 short cuts to open drive directories but that's as far as I can get. No nuffen after that except Control-F11 to get out of there.

at work ... 486DX clone w/Win 3.1, TOS 2.06, GEMUL8R3.02. All seems fine. Use HDX pgm's to install virtual.dives, etc. Transfer all files over from my ST, do what ever I'm going to do. shut down every thing. Next time all is booted up, run the HDX pgm's again to find the virtual drives. Normally all is still there when I loctae tham but once I lost EVERYTHING! Between all the boards, chips, etc., I've spent close around \$300 and don't have a working GEMUL8R! And I'm locked out of my ST files! Least at home. I still have the ST up and running at work but need to shut it down and quit fooling around. Don't have time to mess with two computers..... At home, it's just an inconvenience, unless at tax time I have to get into some thing!"

Beth Jane Freeman asks:

"Has anyone with a 1040 ST every experienced this problem? I turn on the machine (after turning on the hard drive, monitor and external

disk drive) and the computer issues a high pitched whine, but the screen remains black. The monitor is connected. One time I jiggled the power cable at the spot where it connects to the computer, and that started the computer booting, but did I really solve the problem, or was it just a fluke?

Please let me know what's really what."

Sysop Jim Ness tells Beth:

"There is a wire, or connection, in the monitor cable that determines whether you are booting in high rez or medium/low rez. Since you are having trouble booting, it sounds as though this wire may have gotten frayed or broken, and is touching something else.

Try pulling the cable out entirely and see if the computer seems to boot (the hard drive does its stuff, etc.). You may have to buy another cable."

Well folks, that's it for this time. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

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